DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 223 079 FL 013 281

AUTHOR	Hines, Mary, Ed.; Rutherford, William, Ed.
TITLE	On TESOL '81. Selected Papers from the Annual Conference of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (15th, Detroit, Michigan, March 3-8, 1981).
INSTITUTION	Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
PUB DATE	82
NOTE	230p.; For individual papers, see FL 013 282-297 and FL 013 299-301.
AVAILABLE FROM	TESOL, 202 D.C. Transit Building, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Bilingual Education; *English (Second Language); *Literature; *Second Language Instruction; *Second Language Learning; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

The 20 conference papers in this volume address five general themes related to English as a second language (ESL): the ESL learner, the teacher, second language acquisition theory and practice, bilingual education, and the use of literature in second language classrooms. Among the specific topics addressed are: successful learning styles, ethnic styles in classroom discourse, ESL reading proficiency testing strategies, second language learning strategies in the elementary classroom, teacher education, teaching methods for advanced composition, the Whorfian hypothesis, language use in bilingual classrooms, the Lau decision, multiethnic American literature as an ESL resource, and enhancing language awareness through poetry. (RW)

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ON TESOL '81

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Edited by
Mary Hines
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ED223079

Selected papers from the Fifteenth Annual Conference of
Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
Detroit, Michigan
March 3-8, 1981

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Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

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Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 82-050633

Additional copies available from:
TESOL
202 D.C. Transit Building
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C. 20057

FL013281

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
Washington, D.C.

ON TESOL '81

Edited by
Mary Hines
William Rutherford

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Preface

On TESOL '81 is a collection of selected papers which were presented at TESOL's fifteenth annual conference in Detroit of this year. No one theme could accommodate the variety of subjects discussed in the volume but the papers reflect the wide range of questions being raised and examined by those concerned with the teaching of English to speakers of other languages.

Part 1 focuses on the learner. Earl Stevick shares insights into idiosyncratic learning styles of sophisticated second language learners gleaned from interviews. Moving into formal learning situations, Charlene Sato and Grace Washington describe student styles and strategies in actual classroom interaction while in their paper Taco Homburg and Mary Spaan examine students' reading strategies.

In Part 2 the focus shifts to the teacher. H. Douglas Brown begins the section by examining the state of teacher education at present and suggesting programs for the future. Mary Finocchiaro gets right into the classroom to remind teachers of the role they play in the dynamic of learning while Chris Brumfit reminds teachers to make distinctions between syllabuses and methodology, cautioning them not to confuse linguistics with pedagogy. Janet Constantinides and Chris Hall, Sandra McKay and Anne Martin then describe specific teaching techniques they developed as a result of their own classroom experiences.

Diane Larsen-Freeman's paper on the state of the art of research in second language acquisition introduces Part 3, which is then a sampling of questions currently being studied systematically. In their papers, Susan Gass, Patricia Carrell and Elite Olshtain move from linguistic theory to practice and Alexander Guiora speculates on the practical implications of the Whorfian hypothesis.

In Part 4 Robert Milk provides a study rich in detail of learning strategies used by children in bilingual programs, providing one answer to the call for research made by Robert Berdan in his paper.

Part 5 contains three papers reflecting the reemergence of the use of literature in second language classrooms. Henry Widdowson makes the case for it from the perspective of discourse. Robert DiPietro argues the value of the ethnic identity that literature provides students and Jean McConochie presents a detailed description of class use of literary material.

In sum, *On TESOL '81* provides many and varied perspectives on the complex subject of English as a second language.

* * * * * * * * * * *

As with the conference itself, many members of the TESOL organization contributed time and talent to the publication of *On TESOL '81*. For the first time papers submitted to the series were refereed by an Editorial Advisory Board. Readers' responses and comments have helped make the volume truly

selective and they share the credit for the calibre of its contents. Co-editor William Rutherford spent hours sharing his *TESOL Quarterly* expertise as final decisions were being made and here in New York Lynn Goldstein, after serving on the Advisory Board, volunteered extensive proofing of manuscript copy. Paula Schwartz, the Project Assistant for TESOL '81, continued in that role throughout the process of arranging this publication. I am grateful to all for their generous support.

Mary Hines
Conference Chairperson
TESOL '81

Part 1

The Learner

Learning A Foreign Language: The Natural Ways[1]

EARL W. STEVICK
Foreign Service Institute

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My colleague Allen Weinstein once showed me something that I found hard to believe. Even after I saw it a second time I could hardly believe it. This room is too large and our time too short for me to show it to you this morning, but I'd like at least to tell you about it.

This is something that Allen does with groups of 10-50 people. He uses a handout that contains 20 arithmetic problems, arranged in 5 columns and 4 rows. The problems include addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Some of the problems are extremely simple; 2 + 1, 4 ÷ 2 and so on. Others are more difficult: 4,371 - 3,689, or 9,829 × 736, for example. Some are written conventionally: 24 × 7 with the 24 on the top line and the × 7 on the second line. Others are written unconventionally: 39 + 1,252, with the 39 on top and + 1,252 underneath. Each problem is assigned a letter for identification. The order in which all of these types are presented is entirely random. Then at the bottom of the page there are 20 blanks. The instruction which Allen gives to each member of his audience is as follows: "Look at these 20 problems. Do not solve them. Just look at them and decide in what order you would find it most *pleasant* to solve them. Then write in the blanks at the bottom of the sheet the letters which correspond to that order."

After a few minutes, Allen asks for volunteers to tell what order they would prefer. Typically, one person will emphasize one criterion or combination of criteria: size of numbers, conventionality of presentation, overall ease or difficulty, addition before subtraction, and so on. Other people turn out to have employed different – and even conflicting – combinations of criteria. Then another hand goes up, and someone says, "Why, I just put that I'd solve them in order as they stand on the paper!" On the average, it turns out that the audience is more or less evenly divided between these two groups – those who devise their own order, and those who prefer to follow the order given on the handout.

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Before I go on and tell you about the rest of Allen's demonstration, you may want to ask yourselves which of these two groups you yourself would be in. Which would you find most satisfying – not easiest, not fastest, just most satisfying – for solving a random assortment of arithmetic problems?

Now comes the incredible part: not that these two groups exist, but that members of each group find it almost impossible to believe that the other group *really* has the preference that it has. They question whether the members of the other group had understood the instructions correctly, or whether they're sincere in reporting their preferences in this task. I've gone

[1] *Plenary session.*

through this exercise twice myself, as a member of the audience, and I must admit that this has been my reaction too.

And there's one final phase in the demonstration. Once the initial shock has worn off and people begin to believe that the other group *had* heard the instructions and *had* been honest in reporting their preferences, then one begins to hear overtones of moral judgments: the people who worked out their own order imply rather broadly that their neighbors who simply followed the given order are at best unimaginative and uncreative, at worst authoritarian types who would accommodate all too readily to living under a dictatorial regime. In turn the second group suspects the first of being undisciplined, self-indulgent dilettantes, unreliable of character and lacking in thoroughness.

My point, though, is not these moral judgments. It is the starkness of the contrast between personal styles in dealing with a very clear and simple task, and most of all the mutual incredulity that existed between the two groups.

This same point was brought home to me two years ago when Allen brought me two of his students, each of whom in her own fashion had been remarkably successful in gaining control of foreign languages. He knew of my interest in learning styles, and suggested that I might want to interview them. And so I did. I tape recorded an hour-long interview with each one individually. Except for a few very general questions toward the end of each interview, I simply listened to them and did a little paraphrasing in order to verify or correct my understanding of what they were saying. The interviews turned out to be absolutely fascinating, both as narratives and from a theoretical point of view. Not the least fascinating aspect was the dramatic differences between them. When I played the tapes for colleagues both inside and outside the Foreign Service Institute, they generated so much interest that I recorded interviews with a third subject, and then a fourth, and now have a total of seven. After each, I was amazed to find that it was as unlike its predecessors as they had been unlike one another. Seven people, each in her or his own way gifted at foreign languages, displaying a few very general similarities, yes, but displaying much more plainly an array of striking—sometimes even bizarre—dissimilarities and even contradictions. I'd like to share with you a few excerpts from these interviews, partly just because they're fun, but partly also because I think they may challenge or confirm—but in one way or another illuminate—our ideas about what goes on inside this mystery that we call language learning.

At this point, I should explain to you the title I'm using today: "The Natural Ways of Learning a Foreign Language." This has nothing directly to do with Tracy Terrell's very interesting "Natural Approach." It refers rather to the fact that most if not all of my subjects seemed to consider that they were only going at language learning the way everyone with any sense does. Some even used the phrase "the natural" to refer to their own personal sets of strategies. Listen to the first, a woman in her 40s who had done a fair amount of travel both as a single person and in connection with her husband's career.

"But it seems to me . . . I don't think that what I'm doing is unusual, because *I* don't *know* anything different." And I said, "This seems so much a part of you, it's hard to imagine how other people *don't* operate this way."

And she replied, "Yes." And later in the interview, "It's hard for me to say, because when I don't realize that I *shouldn't* know [the words] and *do* know them, I'm not aware of this. Do you know what I mean? It just seems natural to me." And at the very end, she comments, "Every child who has learned to speak before he's 5 years old has learned language the way I learned English or any other language – the way I'm learning Norwegian now!"

Now what *was* this woman doing that she considered to be so obvious and so natural? The hour-long interview is of course a complex document which will bear further study and more than one interpretation. Two characteristics, however, stand out quite clearly – two characteristics which together may account for most of her success with languages. One is her ability to get back what she has heard:

"I don't think I learn so much through seeing what's on the printed page. If I hear somebody lecture on a subject like anthropology, afterwards it's very easy for me to reproduce it, though not verbatim. I have an aural memory."

She also has remarkable conscious control over her hearing: "When I hear poor pronunciation in class, I try to block out that person's Norwegian pronunciation. At the same time, I try to stay tuned in on that person's meaning. I still want to communicate with that person, but I try not to remember his pronunciation."

Q: "This is almost like a Dutch door, where you can slough off the sounds while still letting the meanings in."

A: "Yes, Yes."

Q: "You're saying this as though you consciously do this."

A: "Yes, Yes, Yes."

A second characteristic of this learner is that she takes what she hears, and subjects it to vigorous mental activity:

"If there's a language I don't understand, I don't just wait passively, the way I've seen other people do. I'm there listening. I give my full attention to it. I'm an active participator." She then goes on to summarize the way she had arrived at the meanings of two words in that day's reading lesson.

By far her most striking characteristic, however, was her ability to take in all sorts of data – many of them subliminal – and synthesize them. This allowed her on occasion to almost literally "pick languages out of the air." In one incident, vouched for by the supervisor of her course:

"I think it was my first or second week of Norwegian. I overheard the Danish and Norwegian teachers discussing a recent oral exam, and they said that this person had just come in from such-and-such a country, and that he had been sure he was going to get a very high grade when in fact he hadn't done so well on the translation. They discussed this for about 4 or 5 minutes, and I was able to follow their meaning."

As she was telling me about this incident, I was thinking how I'd like to let her try her ear on a conversation in a language to which she had had no exposure whatsoever. About that time, in walked the Swahili teacher, and asked me something that led to a conversation of perhaps 5 or 6 exchanges. Almost immediately, this interviewee exclaimed, "I understand it!" and again, "I understand it!" When the Swahili teacher had left, she said, "Ok, I can say

what this conversation was about. His room is cold. He wants it warm, and there's something – I guess the thermostat – in the corner that isn't working, and you said that in 10 or 12 minutes you would be able to go up."

Now in fact, every last detail in this confident and actually quite brilliant interpretation of the conversation was totally wrong. The Swahili teacher had actually come in to ask for a copy of a booklet that we use for introducing our students to the reading of East African newspapers. He had explained that his copy was missing. Yet if anything, the student's interpretation of our conversation was all the more instructive for having been erroneous. We were able to pick out a few of the cues to which she had been responding and which she had woven into a clear pictorial tapestry. First of all, the day was quite cold, and so was our building. The teacher had also used the words *nakili yangu* 'my copy,' which the student had heard as something like the Spanish word *caliente,* with which she associated the meaning 'cold.' Her inference about the location of his room evidently came from a hand gesture which he had used to point at a file shelf where copies of the booklet were normally kept. And so on.

In summary then, this learner (Learner A) takes in, and recalls an exceptionally wide range of stimuli, has an unusual degree of control over the oral sector of her intake, and is conscious of a great deal of processing of her intake, both deliberately and nondeliberately.

The second person about whom I'd like to tell you a little we can call "Learner C." C is a single woman probably in her late 20s, who has served as a secretary in Latin America and Germany. Although she had had almost no formal instruction in either language, she had received 2+ in oral interview tests in both. Moreover, according to her supervisor, the native-speaking interviewers felt that although she made a number of linguistic errors, the cultural atmosphere that she created was extremely comfortable, and that talking with her was not at all like communicating with a foreigner. In contrast to her demonstrated remarkable ability to pick up and use languages, her score on the MLAT had been only 45.

Like the first student, C appeared to believe that she had only done what is natural for everybody. In explaining her achievement in Spanish and German, she said, "I've been lucky because I've had friends that I've been able to become integrated with, and any dum-dum – I mean anybody with average intelligence – can learn that way."

Virtually all of C's German had come simply from associating with German-speaking people: "I had a boyfriend there for two years, and I knew his parents, and I had a group of friends, and I knew that they would speak to me in simple language and repeat if I needed it." In this way, C developed a high degree of self-assurance and communicative competence in the language. Like A, she seemed almost to have "picked it up out of the air." In important ways, however, C was quite unlike A. For one thing, she did virtually no conscious processing of linguistic input: "Like I said, I don't pay attention. Oh, I pay attention to what people say, but not to how they say it. It just enters in, and even if I don't understand every word, of course I understand what they mean."

Q: "It just comes in directly, without a lot of analysis."

C: "No! I don't think at all! If you say something to me in Spanish or German, it comes in like English. I can honestly say that I don't think I have ever thought about foreign languages until I came to this school."

C's production is as spontaneous as her comprehension. In saying what she wants to say, she is completely comfortable even though she sometimes has to resort to circumlocutions. When she is required to say something the way the textbook tells her to, she instantly becomes desperately uncomfortable:

C: "I've never memorized. In a dialog like the one we're studying now, the students know these words and can say them. But I have so many other words I can use. Like, I don't want to use one particular word because I wouldn't normally use it. I would come out with a different phrase."

At one time in informal study of Japanese, she had enjoyed memorizing a number of sentences that she had elicited, but now, memorizing dialogs out of the German book is, as she put it,

"not fun, maybe because I have so many other words to put into the same meaning, rather than using the particular words that are in the dialog."

C had other difficulties with the book as well. In reading silently, she had extraordinary difficulty in recognizing even words that were very familiar to her in speech. Reading *aloud* from the book was worse than that—it was traumatic.

"It was always more difficult for me to read out loud. In grade school, for example, in English, if I had to read out loud from the book, my voice would crack. I could speak to the class very clearly, but in reading, I would stutter. Now in German, I could say to my classmates the same things that are in the book, without the slightest qualms, if I were allowed to do it by myself in my own words. But as things are, I'm practically down to the point of taking tranquilizers."

Now, just what sort of control had C gained over the grammatical system of German? At one point she mentions her "incorrect patterns." Her supervisor, an experienced and astute observer of such matters, replies:

W: "I really don't detect, nor has anyone else ever detected, any patterns that you've learned *wrong*. What we *have* detected are areas where there aren't any patterns at all—areas in which you just flounder around at random. There's a big difference between that and making the same mistake consistently. In areas where you *have* formed patterns, you've formed them accurately."

C, then, appears to be a classic case of full-blown adult second language acquisition—acquisition with little or no formal learning—and this process has worked pretty well for her in the past. She is, however, convinced that what she needs is to "buckle down" and master the use of the endings that are found on articles and adjectives, no matter how unpleasant. She is even quite willing to sacrifice temporarily her fluency and ease in the language, hoping that on her return to Germany she will be able to build it up again, this time on a more solid grammatical foundation. In chance encounters which we had in the weeks following the interview, however, she repeatedly expressed appre-

hension on this point. On a Christmas card two years later, she reports:

> "I frankly don't think my German has improved any, mainly because I don't make the effort to read, and that for me is the only way I think I'll ever improve. At first upon returning to Germany I was afraid of speaking, but then I fell right into it and actually I don't think I make as many mistakes as I did before the class. I ask people to keep an ear out for mistakes and, as it usually goes, when I correct myself I usually make another mistake the second time around, on something that was correct the first time."

(It sounds as though C had had a good big bite out of Eve's apple!)

Carla, then, is similar to Ann in "picking languages out of the air." She is, on the other hand, quite dissimilar to Ann in that she is not so conscious of the inputs that she receives, does not consciously process them in such detail, and has trouble both with reading and with grammar.

Let's move on now to Burt, our third gifted learner. Burt is a man in his late 30s who has done well with Latin, Russian and Chinese. He studied Chinese for two years in Taiwan, then served there, and has received the very high rating of 4 on the FSI test. At the very beginning of our interview, Burt comes out with the refrain that by now is becoming familiar:

> "What has worked for me more than any other thing is the so-called 'Natural Approach' to language learning."

Here we go again!

And what does *Burt* understand by 'The Natural Approach'? Not the same thing as Tracy Terrell, I can assure you! No, for him the 'Natural Approach' means:

> "imagine that you're an infant again, and begin by listening, listening, listening—absorbing, repeating to yourself, repeating after the teacher, making certain that one understands the vocabulary and then using it, preferably in simple sentences, and then building up from there."

From his later remarks, it is fairly clear that by "listening, listening, listening" Burt does not mean a protracted silent period of the kinds that we have heard about from Postovsky, Krashen, Winitz, and others:

> "For the first six months in class it was entirely one-on-one, entirely in Chinese, entirely either repeating after the teacher, or attempting to construct very simple sentences to get one's idea across in Chinese, with constant correction by the teacher."
>
> "The first six months also included a good deal of drill, and these would not necessarily consist of more than a series of unrelated sentences. Then after that they gave us the same textbooks that Chinese children use when they start school. The whole point was, at least as I understood it, to learn the language in the way that an average Chinese would learn it—again, a natural, childlike method."

At the time of the interview, Burt was a student of Japanese. He was generally doing quite well, but he remarks:

> "A while back, all of us were saying that we probably needed more drill in the classroom—more hearing Japanese and simply repeating after the teacher. Something to burn the patterns into your brain."

Another interviewer, who had already listened to Ann's and Carla's tapes, asked Burt directly whether he was the kind of person who was able to "pick language up from the air." He replied that he had known such people, but that he was not one of them. He agreed with my characterization of his style as "going home at night and getting the new material down cold, and then coming in the next day and using it."

Burt consides that one part of the explanation for his success with languages is that he has what he calls a "trick memory": he had never bothered with ordinary flash cards for vocabulary learning because, as he puts it, "I remember virtually everything." This applied not only to the spoken forms of Chinese words, but also to the shapes of the written characters. I tried twice to find out whether his "trick memory" came to his aid when he suddenly needed a word in the middle of a conversation, but this did not seem to be the case.

In one final respect Burt differed sharply from Ann and Carla. Both of them seemed to have integrative attitudes towards the foreign-speaking communities with which they interacted, and had unusually good accents. (It's one of my pet hypotheses that integrative attitudes and good accents are somehow related.) Burt, on the other hand, described his pronunciation as clear enough to be easily understood, but he would never be mistaken for a native speaker. He seemed to be quite comfortable with this.

The last gifted learner that I'd like to tell you about this morning is D. D is not an FSI student, but a friend whom I interviewed on a visit to New York. She is in her 30s, with extremely wide experience of languages, and with considerable knowledge of linguistics and language teaching. Perhaps because of this sophistication, D at no time implied that her way of learning was "The Natural Way." Even so, it is clearly the way that is natural for her. Again, we will find some similarities to Ann, Carla and Burt, but also some striking differences.

D's system for gaining control of a new language consists of only two steps. The first step is to get for herself an intellectual understanding of some fragment of the structure of the language. This she may accomplish either through eliciting data and doing her own analysis, or through reading in a grammar book. The second step is to expose herself to the language in a communicative setting, either by talking with native speakers or by reading. In the former case, it is essential that the speakers of the language appear to want to communicate with her, and also that they be willing to wait while she gets out what she wants to say. So in her interactions with native speakers, she may at one and the same time—overtly—be carrying on a genuine communicative give-and-take with them, and also—covertly—be systematically exploring the range of use of some grammatical feature and drilling herself on it. She has followed this same two-step system of establishing intellectual understanding and then moving directly to communicative use ever since she was a sophomore in high school. Memorizing dialogs, doing drills in the ordinary sense, listening to tapes, and concentrating on pronunciation are all wastes of time for her, and she dislikes being required to engage in them.

This austere and unorthodox approach has brought D to the "3" level in an amazing array of languages. In two of the most exotic, she has repeatedly been

mistaken on the telephone for a native speaker who must have been away from her country of origin for a number of years. She thinks that her good pronunciation is a byproduct of exposure, and that the reason she achieves it without working directly *on* it is that she has a feeling of wanting to be like the people in the country. As she sees it, this integrative motivation in no sense denies her identity as an American.

Carla hated to read aloud as a child, and so did Doris. But Doris' dislike for it in English was clearly related to the fact that she felt her performance was being evaluated. By contrast, she enjoys reading aloud in the language she is studying now, simply because it is part of an intellectually challenging game. Here, of course, she parts company with Carla.

Well, this brings us to the end of our examples. The question of course, is what they show us—what they're good for. Most obviously, they are real-life data against which we can test the theories and the concepts that we put together on the basis of our earlier formal research and informal experiences. I expect that as you have sat listening to me just now, many of you have been doing exactly that, either in writing or in your heads. And that is of course one very legitimate way to respond to information like that I have been giving you.

Another equally legitimate response would be to treat Ann, Carla, Burt, and Doris as a set of four related equations, and to try to "solve them simultaneously"—in other words, to try to come up with some underlying pattern which they would all turn out to exemplify—looking for what they have in common. If we look for shared characteristics on the technique level—use or non-use of memorization, or ways of dealing with pronunciation, for example—I don't think we'll find much.

What I *would* suggest they have in common is much more abstract. I am ready to assume, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that each of these people's way of going at new language is a *gestalt* unto itself—a configuration, not just a combination or conglomeration of separate practices—a system and not just a set. That is the possibility that I would like you to consider with me for a few minutes.

One of the reasons for studying successful learners is to see what they do so that we can teach other people to do the same, and in that way help *them* to learn better. One way to do research on successful learners is to ask the same series of questions of a large enough number of them so that our findings will have statistical reliability. In this way we can hope to isolate a number of behaviors which are in the statistical sense more characteristic of good learners than of other learners. Then, we might reason, the next step is to find some way to teach those behaviors to learners who are having trouble. As they adopt these behaviors, they too should begin to be more successful.

The extent to which this approach is effective will be proved by experience. Meanwhile, however, the data that I have presented today raise one very important question: What is the nature of the differences among learners? Where do they come from? Are they comparable, for example, to keeping one's head down when swinging a golf club? To the extent that they are, the particular research-based approach that I have just outlined ought to work. Or are they more comparable to being color-blind or tone-deaf or left-handed

or easily hypnotizable? I discovered last summer, to my great amazement, that not all beginning students of a foreign language visualize what they are reading about, and at the same time that people who do *not* automatically visualize what they are reading can be amazed at those of us who do. I find that this kind of visualization is a great help to me, but I was left with the very distinct impression that I could not expect to teach the process to a non-visualizer—at least not by merely pointing it out to her. Yet the differences among Ann, Carla, Burt, and Doris sound much more like this difference than like the difference between golfers who do and do not keep their heads down while swinging. Once again, then, where do these differences come from? Are they determined by genes? Are they basic awarenesses brought along from previous incarnations? Were they shaped in early childhood experiences? If any of *these* three guesses is correct, then to teach the strategies of the successful to the unsuccessful becomes a much more dubious undertaking.

I have illustrated the dramatic variety which exists among individuals with regard to their learning styles. This variety is sometimes mentioned in the literature *about* language learners. In what we publish for language learners, however, we have found it almost impossible to keep from implying that the differences among them are quantitative—that their minds all work in basically the same way, except that some work more clearly or more quickly than others. The accounts given by ACBD emphasize the *qualitative* aspect of the differences among learners.

The data which we have sampled together today are of a kind which have rarely been used by theoreticians of language learning. They are obviously not data for research in its most common present-day meaning—data which can be compared, counted, correlated with one another, and computerized. But neither are they the data of longitudinal studies. Rather, they are accounts, gathered with some care, of how the process of learning and acquiring languages seemed to those who had experienced it. The proper treatment for data of this kind is not to count them and correlate them, but to contemplate them—to look at them closely and patiently, in the light of our concepts and our questions sometimes, of course, but at other times to look at them with empty minds and open eyes. What we see at these times will prove nothing. Intuition alone, however convincing, never proves anything. It is the source of guesses that may then be tested by non-intuitive means. Just as intuition untested is mere speculation, so the hypotheses that we test will be only as worthwhile as the insights from which they are drawn. If statistically controlled research guarantees breadth to our conclusions, and longitudinal studies give to them a valuable second dimension, so the empathetic consideration of relatively uncontaminated firsthand accounts can contribute to our formulations the dimension of depth.

We as a profession are unlike ACBD. Each of them had to do her or his learning alone, within their respective learning styles. Carla could not draw on Doris' ability to handle grammatical abstractions, and Burt could not benefit from Carla's ability to pull things out of the air. If they had all been in the same class they might have respected one another, but they could hardly have helped one another. No, we are more like the people who decided how they

would prefer to solve the arithmetic problems. They differed from one another radically, but facing a large and complex shared task, they could profitably assume the different responsibilities for which their work-styles suited them, and so reach an earlier, fuller solution.

So let it be with us!

ED223081

Ethnic Styles in Classroom Discourse

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Introduction

Just as there are varieties of a language which manifest themselves according to region, social class, age, sex, education and the like, so there are speech styles which distinguish individuals and groups of common ethnic heritage. Given its typically multi-ethnic make-up, the English as a second language (ESL) classroom is an obvious yet hitherto neglected setting for the study of speech styles and for research on interethnic communication. This paper will report on an exploratory investigation in two ESL classrooms of the relationship between ethnicity and patterns of participation in student-teacher interaction.

Ethnicity and conversational style

The relationship between ethnicity and conversational style has become a focal issue in recent sociolinguistic research. Giles (1979), for instance, has reviewed some of the phonological, grammatical, lexical, and prosodic features identified as ethnic speech markers. Others have extended the description of ethnic styles to the discourse level. An example is work on oral narratives across a number of speech communities, such as urban American black children (Kernan 1977; Michaels 1981) and adolescents (Labov 1972), Hawaiian children (Boggs 1972; Watson 1972), and Greek and American adults (Tannen 1978).

The centrality of conversational style in the definition of ethnicity has been foregrounded in Tannen's (1979) comparison of Greeks, Greek-Americans, and other Americans, and in Scollon and Scollon's (to appear a) analysis of Athabaskan-English interaction. In Tannen's study, Greek-Americans—native English speakers—were shown to distinguish themselves from the other Americans in the sample in their adaptation of a characteristically Greek "conversational indirectness." In the Athabaskan-English case, it was again shown that ethnic identity is not so much a choice between languages as it is the presence of Athabaskan ways of interacting in the use of English.

The problematic nature of much interethnic communication between speakers with different conversational styles has usually been discussed in macro-sociological terms (e.g., Barnlund 1975; Giles 1977; Giles and Saint-Jacques 1979) and has not received much systematic linguistic treatment, with

FL013283

[1]I would like to thank Kathleen Bailey and Michael Long for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

a few notable exceptions (Gumperz 1978; Gumperz et al. 1979; Scollon and Scollon, to appear a and b).

Gumperz and his colleagues have documented miscommunications between Pakistanis and Britons in England, some of which resulted from culturally-specific interpretation by the latter of particular prosodic patterns in the English speech of the Pakistanis. Even "sympathetic" British social workers reportedly perceived Pakistani immigrants as evasive and time-wasting during meetings concerning welfare payments, while the immigrants found the social services personnel rude and unnecessarily abrupt.

In the case of Athabaskan-English encounters, the Scollons (to appear a and b) describe how communicative difficulties lead to negative stereotyping by both parties. They emphasize the difference in speaking rules for Athabaskans and other English speakers: in situations where status relationships are unclear, Athabaskans apparently tend to avoid speaking until roles can be somewhat sorted out. English speakers tend to do just the opposite: they speak in order to establish those relationships. The result is often the perception by each party that the other has assumed superior status. In the Athabaskan's eyes, the English speaker does so by taking command of the interaction, by verbalizing and perhaps by seeming to probe for information. From the English speaker's perspective, Athabaskans can appear aloof and unwilling to let themselves be known.

Student-teacher interaction in classrooms

Research such as that conducted by Gumperz et al. and the Scollons has been characterized by a concern for social reform in real-world settings such as the factory floor and the classroom. In the latter, researchers have described the problem of differences in communicative style between school personnel and members of various U.S. ethnic minority groups. They have noted, for example, that while "display" or "known information" questions are frequently used by middle-class, usually white, teachers, such a questioning style is not often used in the homes of black children. As a result, these children may either fail to respond or respond inappropriately to teachers' questions, and teachers unaware of the difference in styles often develop negative expectations of the children's future performance (Heath 1979). Similar observations of classroom participation structure have been made for Hawaiian children (Boggs 1972, in preparation; Au and Jordan 1981) and various North American Indian groups (Dumont 1972; Erickson and Mohatt, in press; John 1972; Philips 1972).

In other work, which has not specifically included an ethnographic study of children's communicative styles outside the school setting, researchers have reported less favorable teacher behavior toward ethnic minorities whose characteristics – e.g., speech style, accentedness, or dialect – apparently prejudice teachers' perceptions of them (Laosa 1979, p. 51). A study by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1973) of Mexican-American and Anglo children in the Southwest found that:

1. Teachers praised or encouraged Anglo children 36% more often than Mexican-American students,
2. The ideas or contributions of Anglo students were used 40% more than those of Mexican-American students,
3. Anglo students had 21% more questions directed to them,
4. The average Anglo student spent about 26% more time speaking in the classroom than the average Mexican-American student.

These findings have been substantiated in work on Chicano children in Los Angeles (Laosa 1979) and on mixed black and white classrooms (Katz 1973). Katz found that white children initiate more talk than their black classmates, and that teachers reinforce this trend rather than equalize participation. Rubovits and Maehr (1973) reported the same pattern even with teacher trainees, who requested fewer responses from black students, praised them less, encouraged them less, and ignored a greater percentage of their contributions. Bailey and Galvan (1979) have labeled such unequal treatment of certain minority group students as the "cushioning effect," whereby teachers attempt to protect academically poor students by not forcing them to respond to questions they may not be prepared to answer.

What may be another manifestation of "cushioning" has been addressed in extensive research on the effect of pausing on the quality of teaching. Budd Rowe (1974) found a striking relationship between the amount of "wait-time" following teachers' questions and the quantity and quality of students' responses. Students perceived as academically poor were generally given less time to respond than those who were given high ratings by their teachers. Budd Rowe also reported that longer periods of wait-time resulted in dramatic changes in the performance of both types of student. Not only did the number of responses to questions increase, but the number of unsolicited responses increased, as did the amount of elaboration and syntactic complexity in the responses. While Budd Rowe did not consider the ethnicity of students per se in her work, to the extent that membership in a minority group has been associated with academic difficulties, the results of the wait-time research may be interpreted in such terms.

The relationship between ethnicity and classroom interaction posited in the studies reported above has emerged through the analysis of classroom discourse. Further research on aspects of language use is needed to clarify the role of ethnicity in other kinds of classrooms with different learners.

An important source of data for research of this kind is the adult ESL classroom, which typically is ethnically heterogeneous and taught by Anglo teachers with little or no knowledge of the cultural backgrounds of more than one or two of the groups represented by their students. It is in this kind of classroom, among others, that differences in participation patterns can be identified for adults as opposed to children and for language rather than content classrooms. Long (1979), for example, has already suggested applications to ESL classes of Budd Rowe's work on wait-time phenomena.

Knowledge about variable patterns of language use in ESL classrooms is not only valuable for its pedagogical applications but is sought by researchers interested in the development of sociolinguistic competence by second

language learners as well. There is some preliminary evidence, for example, that speaking opportunities are important predictors of second language acquisition in and out of classrooms (Seliger 1977; Long 1981). Thus, the amount of talking time obtained by learners in classrooms may bear some relationship to their communicative development. The degree to which classroom participation structures accommodate or suppress the various ethnic patterns of learner speech remains to be determined.

Purpose of the study

The present study was an exploratory investigation of the relationship between ethnicity and the distribution of talk in university ESL classrooms. It addressed the questions of 1) whether ethnic patterns of participation were observable, as reflected in aspects of turntaking, and 2) whether interruption behavior differed with respect to a learner's ethnic background. Of central concern was the characterization of Asian and non-Asian patterns of classroom interaction.

Students' conversational turns were first quantified in terms of the speaker's ethnic affiliation – Asian or non-Asian. Applying categories described below, additional coding of student and teacher verbal and nonverbal behavior then provided an initial understanding of some means by which ethnicity and the differential distribution of talk were related.

Participants

The participants in the study were two groups of university students enrolled in intermediate ESL courses, and their teachers. The first group consisted of 23 learners, 17 men and six women, from various countries. Fifteen of these learners were Asian and eight non-Asian. Their teacher was the present researcher, a 29-year-old Japanese American woman. A comment is in order here regarding the participation of the researcher in the study.

Using oneself as a subject of research is best avoided in most cases because of the obvious possibility of contamination of the data. However, in exploratory studies such as this one where not much is known about the phenomena being investigated, and a general picture is sought, an insider's view of a situation is invaluable for a number of reasons. For example, the researcher as participant is able to identify behavioral patterns that may not be salient to an outsider because of the latter's restricted knowledge of the situation and the social relationships within it. Moreover, the insider's perspective allows a richer interpretation of the data, which, in turn, can lead to a more informed choice of foci and units of analysis in subsequent research.

Partly as a means of corroborating the findings contributed by this researcher's class, observations of another ESL class were included. This second group, also ethnically mixed, consisted of eight learners, four men and four women. There was an equal number of Asians and non-Asians – four of each. Their teacher was a Caucasian American woman in her early thirties. Table 1 displays the breakdown for both classes by sex and ethnicity.

TABLE 1

Participants in the study

	Class 1	Class 2	1 + 2
Asian male	10	3	13
Asian female	5	1	6
Non-Asian male	7	1	8
Non-Asian female	1	3	4
Total	23	8	31

Data collection

For both classes, all of the taped sessions consisted of exercise-centered discussions involving the entire class which were directed by the teacher.

For Class 1, three 50-minute sessions were videotaped by a technician provided by the university's teaching assistant training program. Prior to these tapings the students and their teacher had familiarized themselves with videotaping through regularly scheduled class activities in which oral presentations had been recorded and reviewed. Thus, the disruptive effect of the equipment during the data collection for the study was felt to have been minimized as much as is possible in a classroom setting. As a final precaution the students were told that the videotaping was a routine part of teacher training at the university, as indeed it was.

Data for Class 2 were not collected through videotaping, since in this case the procedure would have been disruptive to both students and teacher. Instead, the data were collected through in-class observation and coding, and audiotaping. Again, the corpus consisted of three class sessions.

Analysis

Both sets of data were coded and portions transcribed. In the case of the videotaped material, coding was done subsequent to all taping. Coding of Class 2's sessions was for the most part completed during the in-class observations and later checked against the audiotapes.

The coding categories were the following:

1. General Solicit (teacher to class)
2. Wait-time (following General Solicit)
3. Response to General Solicit
   a. Asian
   b. Non-Asian
4. Personal Solicit (teacher to individual)
   a. Asian
   b. Non-Asian

5. Response to Personal Solicit
   a. Asian
   b. Non-Asian
6. Wait-time (following Personal Solicit)
7. Self-Selection by Student
   a. Asian
      1) Bid (paralinguistic cue such as hand-raising, eye contact with teacher)
      2) Unbid
   b. Non-Asian
      1) Bid
      2) Unbid
8. Teacher Feedback to Student Self-Selection

These categories are similar to those commonly used in the analysis of classroom interaction (e.g., Allright 1980; Bellack et al. 1966; Fanselow 1977; McHoul 1978; Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) and dyadic conversations (e.g., Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974). Within the framework of this study, a general solicit is a request made by the teacher for a response from anyone in the class. It is usually a question such as "so what is a logical answer to number 5 in exercise B?". A personal solicit is a teacher question or invitation to respond directed at a particular individual. A self-selection is a turn taken by a student in the absence of a solicit, either general or personal, from the teacher. Self-selection may or may not involve bidding, the signaling of a desire to talk by cues such as hand-raising or eye contact with the teacher.

The categories 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 were meant to yield information about the frequency of participation by the Asians and non-Asians. The extent to which participation hinged upon teacher allocation of speaking turns was to be derived from the relative frequency of responses to personal solicits and self-selected turns. Wait-time—categories 2 and 5—was noted whenever a response did not immediately follow either a general or personal solicit in an effort to capture differential treatment of Asians and non-Asians by the teacher. Finally, teacher feedback—category 8—was also noted for the same reason.

Quantification of the data consisted of calculating frequency totals, which were then analyzed with respect to distributional differences between the Asians and non-Asians. Statistical treatment involved the application of the chi-square test to some of the frequency data.

Results

There proved to be significant differences between the Asian and non-Asian students with respect to the distribution of talk in their ESL classes. Specifically, differential participation was found in the frequency of turns taken overall, in the number of self-selections made, and in the number of teacher allocations of turns to the Asians and non-Asians.

As Table 2 shows, the relationship that emerged between ethnicity and total number of turns taken was that the Asians took significantly fewer speaking turns than their non-Asian classmates ($\chi^2 = 75.78$, $p < .001$). These turns

included both responses to general and personal solicits and self-selections. Although they comprised roughly 61% of the group of learners, the Asians took only 37% of the total of 293 turns. This general finding, it turns out, is partly due to the differences obtained in the distribution of self-selections among the two learner groups.

TABLE 2

Relationship between ethnicity and total number of turns taken

	No. of turns*	%
Asians (n = 19)	107	36.50
Non-Asians (n = 12)	186	63.50
Total	293	100.00
$\chi^2 = 75.78$, df = 1, $p < .001$, two-tail		

*No. of turns = responses to general and personal solicits and self-selections

Table 3 presents the figures for self-initiated participation. Again, the Asians spoke less often than did the non-Asians ($\chi^2 = 48.89$, $p < .001$). In this case, their proportion of the total number of self-selections made amounted to only 34%. It should be noted here that although they did not often take the initiative in class discussions, the Asian students always responded to personal solicits. In other words, their participation was largely dependent upon teacher solicitation, which also proved to be differentially distributed between the two groups.

TABLE 3

Relationship between ethnicity
and number of self-selections

	No. of self-sel. turns	%
Asians (n = 19)	52	33.99
Non-Asians (n = 12)	101	66.01
Total	153	100.00

$\chi^2 = 48.89$, df = 1, $p < .001$, two-tail

When the number of personal solicits, i.e., speaking turns allocated by the teachers, was tallied, Asians were shown to have received roughly 39% of the total in comparison to the non-Asian's 60%. Again, this was a statistically significant difference ($\chi^2 = 19.04$, $p < .001$), as shown in Table 4. Of interest also is that the Asian American teacher behaved no differently than did the Caucasian American teacher on this measure. Whatever ethnic ties the former may have felt toward the Asian students, she nevertheless called upon them less often than she did the non-Asians.

TABLE 4

Relationship between ethnicity
and number of teacher-allocated turns

	No. of T-alloc. turns	%
Asians (n = 19)	37	39.66
Non-Asians (n = 12)	57	60.44
Total	94	100.00

$\chi^2 = 19.04$, df = 1, $p < .001$, two-tail

In sum, the frequency analyses above revealed that the Asian learners contributed to class discussions far less than did the non-Asians. Not only did the former self-select less often, but they were also called upon by their teachers less frequently.

The results obtained in the wait-time analysis were inconclusive. The great majority of general solicits by the teachers elicited an immediate response from the students. In fact, only 17 out of 70 general solicits were followed by a pause longer than a second. In six of these 17 cases, the teacher followed with a personal solicit. In seven instances where she did not, and simply waited, three responses were made by Asians and four by non-Asians. In the remaining four cases, no one responded. These were occasions where the teacher asked a question like "are there any more questions on this exercise?", and where silence was an appropriate response. In sum, little can be concluded about the amount of wait-time allotted by the teachers as it affected the distribution of talk by the Asian and non-Asian learners.

Aside from the scant evidence on wait-time, however, the findings presented above indicated that there were different patterns of participation for the Asians and non-Asians. The issue of how these differences were manifested as interruption behavior is discussed next.

Viewed in terms of the aspect of turntaking just analyzed, interruptions are basically self-selections. In a broad sense, they include both bid and unbid self-selections which are smoothly integrated into the flow of classroom talk. In a narrow sense, they refer to overlaps which cause the speaker holding the floor – usually the teacher – to yield it prior to completing his or her utterance. There were only two instances of the latter kind of interruptive behavior in the data, one by an Asian and the other by a non-Asian. Consequently, the focus of the following discussion is on self-selections which do not overlap with ongoing talk.

There is some evidence that self-selections that could be perceived as interruptions are mitigated by bidding, i.e., by a student's indicating his or her desire to speak by signaling the teacher somehow. If the teacher is talking, such signaling is easily acknowledged with eye contact or a nod, with the student being given the floor upon completion of the teacher's utterance. This pattern of bidding prior to entering the discussion was more characteristic of the Asians than the non-Asians in the data examined.[2] The figures on bidding behavior for Class 1 appear in Table 5. They indicated that the Asians bid before 38% of their self-selected turns, while the non-Asians did so for only 18% of their self-selections. It might be inferred here that the Asians adhered more closely than did the non-Asians to the rule which pre-allocates speaking rights in the classroom to the teacher (McHoul 1978).

[2]Some of the bidding behavior was not recoverable for Class 2 due to the constraints of real-time coding. The corpus examined thus did not include data from Class 2.

TABLE 5

Bidding by Asians and Non-Asians in Class 1

	Total No. of Responses*	No. of Bids	%
Asians (n = 15)	45	17	37.78
Non-Asians (n = 8)	84	15	17.86

*Total No. of responses = responses to general solicits + self-selections

Discussion

On the whole, the data examined have provided evidence for differential patterns of participation for Asian and non-Asian university ESL students. The primary indicator of the disproportionate distribution of talk in the two classrooms studied was the amount of self-selection and teacher-allocation of turns. As in other studies of classroom interaction where academically poor or ethnic minority students' reticence has been reinforced by teacher "cushioning" (Bailey and Galvan 1979), the ESL teacher's perception of unwillingness to talk among Asians may induce her to call upon them less often. What happens, then, is that students who do not self-select frequently and are dependent on teacher allocations for opportunities to talk lose even this option.

It might be argued that in many cases learners strongly prefer not to talk and that the teacher's perception of this sentiment is inaccurate. However, it could be that there is not such a strong aversion to participation but that "quiet" students, Asians in this case, are in fact constrained by their notions of turntaking in class discussions. The bidding behavior reported above suggests that the Asian students felt a stronger need than did the non-Asians to obtain a "go ahead" from the teacher before speaking. Given a large group, much nonverbal bidding could easily be missed by a teacher attending to a student in one part of the room. Bidding, then, is of limited usefulness, particularly in situations where it is not required.

The point being made here is that frequency of participation may be directly related to learners' perceptions of the teacher's pre-allocated speaking rights. While it has been claimed that teachers are accorded maximal speaking rights by virtue of their higher status role in the classroom (McHoul 1978), the unique role relationship obtaining in the typical university ESL classroom suggests modification of this claim. Because university ESL teachers are usually graduate students teaching undergraduates and other graduate students, a more egalitarian system of classroom discourse management can and often does evolve.

Along the cultural dimension, however, different perceptions of the teacher-as-authority role can emerge, and these may be reflected in behavior

such as infrequent self-selection in classroom discussions. That Asians tend to abide by a stricter interpretation of the teacher-student relationship in the context of classroom interaction is suggested by the behavior of the learners in this study.

One implication for teaching that emerges from this finding is the following. Because Asian students may be more dependent upon teachers for opportunities to talk, clarification by teachers of the appropriateness of unbid self-selection may be helpful. In other words, explicit suggestions could be made as to the conduct of classroom discourse, particularly when the teachers themselves expect a more egalitarian distribution of talk to prevail. Finally, closer attention to aspects of turntaking such as bidding may enable teachers to modify their own patterns of discourse management and thereby maximize learners' use of their second language in the classroom.

Summary and Conclusions

This exploratory study has provided preliminary evidence for the role of ethnic styles in ESL classroom discourse. An analysis of participation patterns in two university classes has shown speaking opportunities to be differentially distributed between Asians and non-Asians. The former group has been characterized as taking less speaking turns on their own initiative and as being more dependent on teacher-allocated turns in class discussions.

The extent to which these findings typify many or most university ESL classes remains to be determined through analysis of a larger corpus of data. Moreover, the Asian-non-Asian dichotomy used in the present study can now be refined into a set of categories accounting for each ethnic group represented in a class of learners.

A longitudinal study of participation structures is needed to describe the ways in which classroom interaction is a dynamic phenomenon, i.e., a matter of negotiation between teacher and students over time. In other words, what needs further study is the process through which the various ethnic styles brought together in a heterogeneous class of ESL learners come to be accommodated or suppressed by "American" ways of speaking in the classroom.

A related line of inquiry might pursue the question of how ethnic styles might be differentiated in terms of the functions of learner-initiated talk, if and when it occurs (cf. Allright 1980). Such a focus would permit an analysis of the kinds of contributions to class discussions made and deemed appropriate by different learners; for example, questions directly tied to lesson matters, metalinguistic comments, disagreements with and challenges to the teacher.

Finally, with regard to issues in second language acquisition research, the study of ethnic styles in a second language must incorporate participation patterns in the classroom into a description of learners' communicative networks outside the instructional setting. For those interested in determining the reasons for variable ultimate achievement in second language development (cf. Long 1981; Seliger 1977), the role of interethnic differences in the presentation of self and, thus, the elicitation of input from and interaction with native speakers remains an issue of fundamental importance.

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ED223082

ESL Reading Proficiency Assessment: Testing Strategies

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Introduction

In the 1950s and 1960s, psychologists studying reading processes and reading acquisition in L1 offered a model in which reading is seen as an integrative process, involving cognitive activity occurring simultaneously at all levels, from micro- through macro-processing. Goodman (1967, 1973) calls this a *psycholinguistic guessing game* in which the reader, through a selective process, makes inferences, forms expectations, and tests hypotheses about anticipated information. Goodman found evidence for this through *miscue analysis* of oral reading. Miscues are not errors, but deviations from the printed text which may indicate full comprehension of the text, and which often reveal anticipatory processes. Goodman originally used miscue analysis with beginning L1 readers, and it has since been employed as a tool in L2 as by Cziko (1978, 1980). Cziko reports on oral miscue analysis of both native and non-native speakers of French. He found that intermediate level learners of French made more substitution errors that graphically resembled the text than did native speakers. Both the native speakers and the advanced L2 learners seemed to use an interactive strategy of using both graphic and contextual information. Cziko (1978) reports that even beginning L2 readers can use syntactic constraints, but that only advanced L2 students can use semantic and discourse constraints, which require the ability to retain and integrate information over stretches of time and text.

Likewise, Hauptman (1979), in reporting results of cloze testing on native speakers and L2 learners states that L2 learners have more problems with semantics than with syntax. Interestingly enough, he also noted cloze tasks elicit idiosyncratic responses that occur in an individual in both L1 and L2. For example, certain subjects showed tendencies towards leaving blanks, making semantic errors, or not noticing global cues in both L1 and L2 cloze tests.

Alderson (1980), reporting on problems of trying to use clozentropy to distinguish between native speakers and second language learners, confirms that the cloze task itself appears to be the same in L1 and L2, and that there are individuals who are better or worse at performing this task, regardless of whether they are operating in their first or second language.

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Chihara et al. (1977), however, have considered cloze tests to be very good tests of reading proficiency in ESL. Therefore, it would seem that while cloze tests may serve as good tests of reading comprehension, they may not discriminate well between native speakers and second language learners. Indeed, the idea that a native speaker should get a perfect score on any English language

test can be questioned, as there are varying degrees of native language competence.

Cloze testing may imply to the L2 student that the best word is all-important and that time is best spent memorizing lists, thereby neglecting the use of reasoning techniques that will improve global reading comprehension. Alderson and Alvarez (1977) have suggested the use of nonsense words in the teaching and testing of strategies for assigning meaning to unknown words. They claim that the testing of the meaning of real words is a methodological mistake, because first, if the student knows the real word, then identifying its meaning involves no more than writing a definition (though this may be hard enough), but certainly no word-solving strategies are needed to arrive at a definition; second, using nonsense words in exercises of this type more nearly replicates the actual reading situations ESL students face; and third, the only meaning a nonsense word assumes is derivable from context, thus emphasizing the role of strategies in determining the meaning of nonsense words. Following are some examples of these types of exercises, all taken from Alderson and Alvarez:

1) Michael gave me a beautiful bunch of flowers: roses, dahlias, chrysanthemums, *nogs*, and orchids.
2) Even in the poorest parts of the country, people usually have a table, some chairs, a *roup*, and a bed.
   Over the last twenty years, our family has owned a great variety of *wurgs*: poodles, dachshunds, Dalmations, Yorkshire Terriers, and even St. Bernards.
4) If you asked an average lawyer to explain our courts, the *nerk* would probably begin like this: our *frugs* have three different functions. One *blurk* is to determine the facts of a particular case.

Examples 1 and 3 are exercises that involve superordinate/subordinate relationships; example 2 is an exercise with no stated superordinate, while example 4 is an exercise that involves synonyms and anaphora.

As can be seen from these examples, certain nonsense words are replacements of real words that can easily be identified, and the real words' meanings are most probably known to the students. In these cases, identifying the meaning of the words requires two steps: first, realizing what real word should go in the slot; and second, writing a definition of that word. On the other hand, certain examples (1 and 2) do not lend themselves so easily to replacement and the student cannot insert the required word, but rather, can only say certain things about the word, or describe its meaning. The steps involved in this process are: first, the meaning of the word is limited by the context, which the student must at least partially understand; and second, the student must be able to determine what general characteristics are associated with the nonsense word. The important distinction between these two processes is that in the first, the real word is identified, and in the second, only the meaning of the word is identified; the second situation more closely resembles what

actually happens when an ESL student, while reading, encounters a word or phrase s/he doesn't know.

In this study, the authors wished to observe the readers' processing, rather than to merely test their ultimate performance. In doing so, it may be discovered which processes may be most effective, or efficient, in producing reader comprehension.

Hosenfeld (1977, 1979), in investigating the reading strategies used by L2 students, employed a variation on miscue analysis. Rather than having the students read aloud, she instructed them to "tell me what you're doing as you read this," in other words, to think aloud. She described what she called the reader's *main meaning line* as "nonstop reading behavior;" "his operations as he ascribes meaning to sentences in a relatively uninterrupted manner." (Hosenfeld 1977:111) Her term *word-solving strategies* described the processes employed when the reader's main meaning line was interrupted upon encountering unknown words or phrases. She also categorized these readers' strategies according to grammatical sensitivity, use of logic to assess appropriateness of guess, recognition of cognates, etc. There are some parallels here to the Goodman studies with beginning L1 readers. Grammatical sensitivity indicates that the reader can identify the function of words, thus giving the reader predictive power, and the ability to skip unessential words. The logic component fits into the Goodman model thus: the reader makes a guess as to the probable meaning, continues, will verify, justify, or add information, and then may circle back to correct an inappropriate guess; in other words, the reader employs hypothesis testing. Hosenfeld describes the successful reader as one who 1) keeps the meaning of the passage in mind while reading, 2) reads or translates in broad phrases, 3) skips words that are unessential to the meaning (i.e. recognizes that words are of unequal value), and 4) skips unknown words and continues reading to find words or phrases which provide clues as to the unknown words' meanings.

However, the methods employed by Hosenfeld are best suited to individual readers, and little can be said about trends across a variety of proficiency levels; furthermore, few generalizations can be made about any particular group of ESL students. What seemed desirable was a measure that could test a larger number of subjects, using many of Hosenfeld's procedures.

Procedure

In this study the authors were interested in seeing what happens when the main meaning line is interrupted; what strategies are employed, and how these strategies affect the reconstruction (if any) or continuation of the main meaning line. Secondly, we wished to investigate how word-solving strategies are related to ESL reading proficiency.

It was decided, on the basis of the aforementioned reasons, that one way to investigate the strategies used by ESL students in maintaining and reinstating the main meaning line would be to use a cloze procedure that included the replacement of certain real words by nonsense words.

The authors first used several passages and several different techniques such

as a regular cloze technique of leaving the first and last sentence intact, and leaving every seventh word blank in between the first and last sentence; replacing every seventh word with a nonsense word; using a rational cloze technique where it was decided *a priori* about which words to leave blank; or to replace these blanks with nonsense words. These four different techniques were tried out using much of what Hosenfeld described as her methodology; that is, the authors worked individually with the students through the procedure and watched and assisted them in performing the task. On the basis of preliminary findings it was decided to employ the rational technique. Certain words in the passage were underlined, then some were replaced by nonsense words. This was decided, in part, on the basis of what students had said about the difficulty of some of the real words in the passage.

Description of the measure

The passage selected (cf. Appendix A) was analyzed as to its structure and content. The first two paragraphs, in speaking about the learning processes birds must undergo, demonstrate much parallelism. In each, a general statement is made. In paragraph 1, the general statement is followed by three parallel sentences which are examples to justify the general statement. In paragraph 2, there is a two-sentence general statement, followed by two parallel sentences. The third paragraph, containing the main idea of the passage, opens with a general statement whose idea is contrary to that of the first two paragraphs. It then proceeds to recount, in non-parallel structures, an experiment and finally elaborates on and summarizes the general statement that had first appeared in the first sentence of the paragraph.

Twenty-three words in the text were underlined, and thirteen of these were changed into nonsense words. All articles, discourse connectives, etc. were left intact. The underlined words were either nouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs. All nonsense words retained the morphological features which would indicate their grammatical function.

The text was further analyzed to ascertain what contextual word-solving strategies could be used to determine the meaning of each of the underlined words. These were classified as the following:

1) Recognition of Parallelism: words 1, 2, 3, 8.

It was felt that for this measure the reader would be sensitive to grammatical relationships. The reader will consciously predict the grammatical function of these words, and will probably also have at least a general awareness of the semantic similarity of one to the other.

2) Sentence Bound: words 4, 7, 9, 16, 19.

It was believed all the information required to decipher these words occurred in the same sentence. For example, word 9, *prey*, is keyed to *feed* and *catch* occurring just before it in the same sentence.

3) Forward: words 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

It was felt that in order to understand the meaning of these words, one must read on in the passage to get more information. A tentative decision might be made about the meaning of the word, which would be confirmed or discarded

as processing proceeded. For example, word 13, *lurds*, could be any body part; in the next sentence it can be seen that the control group of pigeons were allowed to exercise their wings, so it can be concluded that in contrast, the experimental group were not.

4) Backward: words 6, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23.

It was believed that in order to understand these words, one must either circle back in the text or remember what had come before. For example, word 20, *urmlews*, refers to the *narrow tubes* three sentences back.

Admittedly, there is some overlap among these categories, and meaning is undoubtedly determined by using several of these strategies together, and possibly other strategies which have not been examined, but what is of interest here is the ability to separate different strategies as much as is possible.

Subjects

There were 39 subjects, all from the three highest intensive course levels at the English Language Institute of The University of Michigan: 10 from Low Intermediate, 19 from High Intermediate, and 10 from the Advanced level. They were all adults, whose L1 was either Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, or Arabic. Also, each student was ranked by the reading teacher as being in the top, middle, or bottom segment of the reading class.

Testing procedure

Students were given the test in their reading classes. Their instructions were first to skim the passage for its general meaning. Then they were to identify known words, and replace nonsense words with real words, or with definitions. For all words, they were to give as much information as possible: grammatical part of speech, meaning or definition, synonyms, what other words in the passage went with the word and gave clues to its meaning, etc. Finally, they were to write a brief summary of the main idea. They had approximately 45 minutes to complete the task.

Scoring

Tests were scored according to the following criteria:

1) Main Idea: derived from the summary. Did they understand the main idea of the passage? A yes/no scoring method was used. The Main Idea was considered to be the idea that flying and the ability to fly is instinctive and needs no practice. Stating the contrast between this instinctive ability and the learning process required for other activities, such as feeding, was not required for a "yes" mark on the Main Idea. This was because several native English speakers who had attempted the test said that they had noted the contrast, yet felt it was not the essential idea. Examples of "no" marks were those who wrote nonsense; gave details only; misunderstood and thought that two species had been experimented on and that flying was either learned or instinctive, depending on the species; or were unable to provide a summary.

2) Grammatical Classification: students got up to 23 marks for grammatical classification of each of the underlined words. Either citing the classification overtly (e.g. writing "noun") or supplying a word of the appropriate class was considered correct.

3) Real Words: students were marked on their ability to give a synonym or definition of each of the 10 real words underlined in the passage.

4) Nonsense Words: students were marked on their ability to give a synonym or definition of each of the 13 nonsense words underlined in the passage. Some students could not supply an appropriate, single, real word to replace the nonsense word, though they clearly understood the meaning. For example, for word 13, *lurds* (wings), such definitions as "bird has two. One on left and one on right" were scored as correct.

5) Word-Solving Strategies: since ability to identify the real and the nonsense words may require different word-solving strategies, students' scores on both real and nonsense words were separated into those strategy categories referred to above: Parallelism (numbers 1, 2, 3, 8), Sentence-Bound (numbers 4, 7, 9, 16, 19), Forward (numbers 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15), and Backward (numbers 6, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23). The results of the scoring are shown in Appendix B.

Data analysis and results

The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to determine if the differences in the means for the eight measures outlined above for the groups, as defined by level, rank, and main idea were significant. The Kruskal-Wallis test is a nonparametric alternative to the one-way analysis of variance and is more applicable to these data in that the data are more ordinal in nature, and because the sample is relatively small. A significant Kruskal-Wallis statistic would indicate that the means for the groups are different for a particular measure.

TABLE 1

Kruskal-Wallis statistics for the comparisons among levels, ranks, and the main idea

Measures	LEVEL	RANK	MAIN IDEA
1. Grammar Correct	10.155*	8.471*	3.303
2. Real Wds. Correct	4.161	10.324*	4.235*
3. Nonsense Correct	5.088	9.924*	11.021*
4. Total Correct	4.189	11.905*	9.992*
5. Parallel Correct	5.059	9.760*	6.178*
6. Sentence Bound	2.717	2.139	5.786*
7. Forward Correct	5.238	10.108*	9.202*
8. Backward Correct	9.055*	10.384*	8.409*

*significant at or below .05

Kruskal-Wallis tests (see Table 1) indicate that for the three levels of Low Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced, the number of correct grammatical categorizations and the number of words involving backward strategies answered correctly showed significant differences among the three levels.

For relative standing in a particular class (the measure of rank) Kruskal-Wallis statistics indicated that all measures but the measure of the number of words involving sentence-bound strategies showed significant differences among the three rankings.

For the criterion measure of understanding the main idea (and being able to write it down), all measures but grammar correct showed a significant difference between the two groups.

Since it was suspected that a great many of these measures correlate rather highly, as for example all measures involving getting the meaning correct (measures 2-8), and would thus result in similar Kruskal-Wallis statistics inasmuch as they are correlated, the measures which best differentiated the levels, ranks, and understanding of the main idea were determined using discriminant analysis. Discriminant analysis was used to determine which measures best discriminate, separately or in conjunction with one another, 1) among the three levels, 2) among the three rankings, and 3) between those who got the main idea and those who didn't. Discriminant analysis is a statistical procedure which first selects the measure which best separates the groups, removes the variance that this measure has taken up, and shares with the other measures, and then selects the next best measure which discriminates among the groups with the variance that remains. This procedure eliminates from the selection process measures that share a great deal of their variance with other measures.

Discriminant analysis results show that there are two measures that discriminate among the three levels. These measures are 1) the number of correct grammatical categorizations made, and 2) the number of nonsense words correctly defined. For rank, only the measure of total correct discriminates among the three ranks. Last, for the main idea, only the measure of the total number of correct answers for those words involving forward strategies was significant.

Conclusions

In summary, the authors have tried to use a technique which involved the use of nonsense as well as real words in an attempt to obtain information concerning the role of a variety of word-solving strategies on the part of ESL students. It was found that this technique indeed provided information concerning these strategies and how they relate to one another as well as how they relate to understanding a passage. It was found, for instance, that those ESL students who use forward strategies seem best at being able to understand the main idea of the passage. It was also found that being able correctly to define nonsense words as well as real words was related to obtaining a higher ranking

from reading teachers. Also, being able correctly to assign grammatical class was related to ELI course level, but it didn't seem to help much in understanding the reading passage. This is not to say that this ability didn't play a role in understanding, but it lost importance in comparison to other word-solving strategies. A further conclusion is that certain strategies were not related to ELI course level. That is, it was found that understanding the main idea of the passage occurred as frequently at lower levels as it did at higher levels. It seems that the ability to use word-solving strategies that aid in the understanding of the passage were not really related to ELI course level. It appears, as based on the data, that word-solving strategies that aid in the understanding of a passage are skills somewhat independent of ESL proficiency level, and may therefore be required to be taught independently.

The authors acknowledge the fact that this study has not been of a magnitude that provides unequivocal data concerning the nature of word-solving strategies. Rather, it is felt that an attempt has been made to provide a mechanism with which these strategies might be assessed. Also, there were probably not an adequate number of occasions in which strategies of the above type could be employed; only four strategies were examined, while there undoubtedly exist many more that need to be examined. However, this study has provided a framework, as well as some preliminary conclusions, that will allow for a more adequate assessment of ESL students' ability to use word-solving strategies in restoring the main meaning line.

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APPENDIX A

Like people, young birds go through a difficult transition when it's time to strike out on their own. The fledgling must be *(1) glurked* while learning how to feed itself. It must be *(2) protected* while learning how to fly. And in some species, fledglings must even be *(3) mexed* by their parents during their first autumn *(4) migration*.

In most cases, a young bird *(5) tidly* returns once it leaves the nest. But there are *(6) padons*. The young of certain kinds of woodpeckers, *(7) wrens*, and swallows fly back to the nest to sleep. Similarly, some eagles and large hawks *(8) refirk* home for weeks to feed until they learn how to catch their own *(9) prey*.

When it comes to *(10) snerdling*, however, few fledglings need any lessons. Fifty years ago, a German scientist named J. Grohmann raised some young pigeons in *(11) narrow* tubes that *(12) largled* them from moving their *(13) lurds*. At the same time, he *(14) allowed* another group of *(15) snerts* of the same age to be raised by the *(16) medlons* in a nest in the normal way, exercising their wings *(17) vigorously*. When the two groups of pigeons were *(18) torm*, Grohmann took them out into the open and *(19) tossed* them into the air. Surprisingly, the pigeons raised in the *(20) urmlews* flew away as strongly as the ones that had been *(21) unrestrained* in the nest. Grohmann thus proved that the instinctive *(22) grumpity* to fly develops in young birds with or without the *(23) opportunity* to practice.

Adapted from John K. Terres. 1979. When a young bird leaves the nest. *National Wildlife* 17, 5:36.

ED223083

Second-Language Learning Strategies in the Elementary School Classroom[1]

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The study on which this paper is based grew out of my concern for what happens to children who have limited English-speaking ability when they go into American schools. I was particularly interested in what happens to children of elementary-school age. The literature contains little information about this subject outside of studies that analyze production errors and order of acquisition of syntactic features. Virtually no information is readily available about what happens where the child spends most of her school day in this country—in the classroom.

To try to get a picture of what does happen to children who have little or no English-speaking ability when they enter American schools, I decided to select a limited number of subjects to observe as they began their first year in an American elementary school.

As subjects, I selected three sisters who had been in my ESL class for children for ten weeks before school started. As sisters, the girls would have similar socio-economic backgrounds and exposure to English. The girls appeared to be shy children who talked little with others, a factor which might be important in their language-learning process. In their new situation in school, the sisters would be very nearly in the same kind of environment in the sense that they all three would be attending the same school. Thus, the children would share similar backgrounds, similar exposure to English, similar home environment, and similar school environment. It was also important for the study that the school which the sisters were to enter had no ESL or bilingual education program, a factor which might make the children's and the classroom teachers' roles more apparent.

I observed each child in her regular classroom for about an hour a week for the first twelve weeks of school. The girls were in the second, third, and fourth grades. I used a tape recorder and made simultaneous observational notes as I observed in each classroom.

I was interested in looking at two aspects of what happened in the classroom. First, I wanted to know what the children themselves would do to try to acquire English—specifically, what they would do to try to obtain language input and to encourage interaction. Based on what I knew about language acquisition, I didn't expect that there would be much verbal production by the subjects during the period of the study, and so I did not limit my study to consideration of only what the children said. Rather, I looked at everything that they might be doing to learn the language, including, of course, how they managed to perform in their regular school work.

FL013285

[1]Revised version of a paper presented at the annual TESOL Convention, Detroit, 1981.

The second aspect in which I was interested was how the subjects' regular classroom teachers helped the children to acquire English. While children with limited English-speaking ability undoubtedly learn much English from their peers on the playground and in other situations outside of school, children spend most of their day in school in the classroom. Thus, most of the limited-English-speaking child's initial exposure to English takes place in the classroom. It was important then to look at the language of the regular classroom teacher and to look at what strategies she used to provide language input and to encourage interaction to help the subjects acquire English.

Two types of studies were very helpful to me in looking at what the child and her teacher do in this language-learning process. In terms of what the child does, I relied very heavily on the work of Wong-Fillmore (1976). She looked at five Spanish-speaking children in a bilingual education school situation and observed them in play with English-speaking peers. She studied the children in terms of the cognitive and social strategies that they used to learn English, and these are the strategies in terms of which I looked at the subjects of my study.

The cognitive strategies for children are:

1. Assume that what people are saying is directly relevant to the situation at hand, or to what they or you are experiencing.
2. Get some expressions you understand and start talking.
3. Look for recurring parts in the formulas you know.
4. Make the most of what you've got by such tactics as over-generalization.
5. Work on big things; save the details for later.

The social strategies are:

1. Join a group and act as if you understand what is going on, even if you don't.
2. Give the impression — with a few well-chosen words — that you can speak the language.
3. Count on your friends for help.

As to what the teacher was doing, I relied a great deal on the studies of the language mothers use with their children, which is called motherese. These studies show that the language which mothers use with their children is facilitative of the child's language development and that the mother seems to be attuned to her child's psycholinguistic development. In particular, I relied on a first-language acquisition study by Cross (1977) which showed mothers to tune their language to their children's psycholinguistic ability. The mothers Cross studied made discourse adjustments based on their perception of what their children could understand. These adjustments seemed to be much more closely in line with the mothers' perceptions of the children's underlying ability rather than with what the children were producing verbally. Also important is the fact that the discourse of these mother-child pairs had a conversational quality that involved almost a one-to-one ratio of turn-taking.

Of particular importance to understanding the role of the teacher in second-language acquisition is Urzua's work. In one study (1980), which takes

its model from first-language-acquisition research of mothers' speech to children and Cross's (1977) study of mothers' speech adjustments, Urzua looked at the language input of an American kindergarten teacher to an Oriental five-year-old girl in the regular classroom. Urzua's study showed the teacher to be exceptional in terms of Cross's findings of facilitative language adjustments. Urzua found that the teacher expanded her children's language much of the time, repeated original utterances about one-fourth of the time, followed the child's lead in nominating topics, allowed the child to make errors, and concentrated on communication.

Using Cross's and Urzua's studies as a base, I developed a set of teacher cognitive and social strategies to parallel Wong-Fillmore's child strategies, and I used these to evaluate the teachers I observed. The cognitive strategies for teachers are:

1. Use carefully controlled speech.
2. Contextualize speech.
3. Modify speech addressed to the subjects through simplification, semantic expansion and extension, imitation, and self-repetition: use motherese.
4. Reinforce the subjects' attempts; don't worry about details.

The social strategies for teachers are:

1. Encourage the subject to be part of a group.
2. Give the impression that you can understand the subject.
3. Give the impression that you can be counted on for help.

My data suggest that a shy child will initially fail to demonstrate some of the learner strategies Wong-Fillmore identified as being successful. The subjects of my study interacted verbally hardly at all in the classroom, for instance. They demonstrated less evidence of guessing than Wong-Fillmore's good learner. However, the subjects of my study guessed more in written work than in verbal activity, and they attempted much more complex language in written work than in verbal activity. The subjects were not observed to use semantic extensions or overgeneralizations, although they did use many formulaic expressions. All subjects used good attending skills, but they tended to withdraw or tune out when the language input was too difficult for them.

With the possible exception of the youngest sister, the subjects were less skilled socially than Wong-Fillmore's good learner. Initially, the only group the subjects joined was the class at large. All three subjects acted as if they understood what was going on, even when they couldn't have. They were all quick to learn the classroom routine and to follow the routine just like any other student. They took their cues from watching their teachers and the students around them. By the end of the study period, only the youngest child had progressed significantly beyond this point to have joined any subgroup of the class.

Two of the sisters, in particular, gave an impression that they spoke English in volunteering to answer questions which required one- or two-word answers. Beyond this, the youngest girl frequently attempted to give the impression, without using words, that she understood English.

The youngest sister, while using good cognitive strategies, increased her chances for interaction and peer input by her social strategies. She quickly made friends and made use of her friends' help. The oldest sister tended to make up for shyness and fewer social skills by using superior cognitive strategies—an academic approach—and by seeking interaction with a trusted adult. This has important implications for educational programs for limited-English-speaking children.

One important conclusion of the study is that the fact that little verbal production was observed does not seem to be correlated with the girls' English-language ability as evidenced by their performance in written school work and tests and by teacher and investigator evaluations. It appears that the fact that a child does not interact verbally very much does not necessarily mean that her knowledge of the language is inferior to a more verbally active child's. In addition, since children have been shown to benefit from initial periods of silence and active listening (Asher 1977, Gary 1978, and Postovsky 1974), the shy child may not be at a disadvantage after all.

Another important conclusion of the study is that the child will participate as best she can from the beginning so long as she is interested in what is going on. I think it is important to recognize the very active role of the learner and her ability to map out her own language-learning strategies. This, too, has implications for schools and teachers.

Among the most important of the strategies of the teachers is the use of carefully controlled speech, as best exemplified by the teacher of the oldest child. Review of her recorded speech showed simple, clear, consistent speech patterns with few asides or tangential remarks. The speech of all three teachers was generally contextualized. One teacher was particularly adept at producing a physical or visual means of contextualization.

Little evidence was found of teachers' modifying their speech addressed to the subjects. One teacher, just as a rule, however, used simplification, semantic expansion and extension, and repetition—the language of motherese.

The study showed that the child's teacher can facilitate interaction and learner strategy much as a mother does. The teacher can provide meaningful language input which has the characteristics of motherese. She can use carefully controlled speech. She can simplify and use self-repetitions, short, simple sentences, many imperatives, and questions. In addition, the teacher's language in the classroom is generally suitable for the child's cognitive development and uses of English to increase the child's knowledge of the world.

One important element that seems to be missing in the classroom environment, however, is the opportunity for sustained one-to-one interaction and hence the conversational management qualities of "tuning" as Cross and Urzua describe it. Significant contributions to language learning seem to be made in one-to-one interaction which involves an almost equal number of

turns and in which the caretaker – whether mother or teacher – is attuned to the child's psycholinguistic development. Because this element is largely missing from the classroom, opportunity for one-to-one interaction needs to be provided for outside the classroom.

In addition to what she can do to provide input, the teacher can make important contributions to the child's language development by fully integrating the child into the classroom and by treating her as a full member of the class. All three teachers in this study encouraged the subjects to be part of a group. Generally speaking, the subjects were treated just like the other students, and they were included in all activities.

Teachers can give the impression that they can understand the child and that they believe that the child can understand them. The teachers in this study gave this impression. They called on the subjects as they would have on any other students, usually, however, either when the subjects volunteered or for simple questions that the teacher might have expected the subject to be able to answer.

All teachers observed gave the impression that they could be counted on for help. They acted to build the child's confidence and trust by communicating their confidence in the children's ability and by their emphasis on communication.

In summary, I found that students will vary in the strategies they use in acquiring English. Students may be expected to show individual variations in attending skills and in guessing. Some students, especially shy ones, will be less willing than others to volunteer verbal answers unless they are certain of the correct response. One can expect that students will be more willing to guess in written or individual work than in the open classroom.

Both shy and outgoing students may be expected to remain quiet and to do little talking in class for some time. They will listen a great deal, and they will begin to learn and to use formulas. They will vary in choice of person to whom they will begin talking: some will choose peers, others will choose adults. One-to-one situations will be more conducive to attempts at talking.

The limited-English-speaking child will participate as best she can from the beginning, provided she is interested. She will listen carefully to get the gist of things and will begin to build her language from the familiar formulas that she knows.

Students may be expected to compensate for differences in cognitive or social skills, as the oldest child in this study compensated for her shyness by using her cognitive abilities to full advantage in figuring out what she needed to know in order to do her school work and by consciously seeking help from adults.

Finally, the fact that a child does not interact verbally very much does not necessarily mean that her knowledge of the language is inferior to a more verbally active child; it may simply mean that she is not demonstrating her knowledge verbally.

As for teachers, I found that they can carefully control and contextualize their speech and use the language of motherese in the classroom so as to facilitate the limited-English-speaking child's learning task. Teachers can provide

important social support systems for the child. Primarily because of the nature of the classroom, however, one-to-one interaction opportunities are limited and need to be provided for in another setting.

A principal goal of the study was to make some practical suggestions for elementary school programs and teachers to facilitate integration of limited-English-speaking children into classrooms where there are few such children in a school and where there are no bilingual education or ESL programs. The suggestions are divided into those for programs in elementary schools and those for teachers. Some of the suggestions for schools are the following:

1. Where possible, provide a break-in period for students before they enter the mainstream of the American classroom. During this period, an ESL course can be provided. The course should be clearly delimited in time. Six weeks of four hours a day would seem to be ample for students entering grades two to five. A break-in period should not be necessary for a first-grader and is not recommended for children entering nursery school or kindergarten.

The course should be conducted by a trained elementary school teacher or by an ESL teacher trained in elementary-school teaching materials and methods. ESL, per se, should not be taught. Audio-lingual methods, which for children may produce surface-learning results but not necessarily acquisition, should not be used. Audio-motor techniques such as Asher's total physical response, however, can be used. Active listening should be emphasized and spontaneous verbal expression should be encouraged. Writing skills might be taught since many children come having been taught writing styles that differ from those in use in American classrooms. The teacher should work as quickly as possible on vocabulary building, since this is an important requisite for reading. English should be taught not as language qua language, but through regular content subject matter and experiential learning. Any materials used should be representative of the language and subject matter of the regular classroom.

The course should be conducted in an orderly but warm manner. The importance of the child's first impression of an American teacher cannot be overemphasized. The teacher should aim to build trust and confidence and to motivate the child to want to know the language in order to know her American teachers and peers better.

Success here will be worth the postponement by a few weeks of the opportunity for social interaction with English-speaking peers. In fact, the break-in course, if it lives up to its goals, can pave the way for earlier successful social interaction once the limited-English-speaking child enters the regular classroom. However, if the school is unable to provide for such a course, many of the recommendations for it can be incorporated in the regular classroom and in imaginative approaches to pull-out ESL.

2. The limited-English-speaking child should be fully integrated into the regular classroom at her normal grade level. Her teacher should be instructed in strategies she may use to enhance the child's acquisition of English. If workshops for teachers of limited-English-speaking children are available in the area, the teacher should be given the opportunity to attend them.

3. If a break-in course has been provided, the link with the teacher of that course should be maintained after the child enters school. This might be done through weekly half-hour meetings in which the child has the opportunity to bring questions to the teacher. These meetings should be on a one-to-one basis and should continue until the child no longer feels the need for them.

4. In addition to a buddy system utilizing peers, an avenue should be provided for using teacher aides or volunteers who are adults and who might interact with students who are more comfortable seeking input from adults. Such aides or volunteers would have to know appropriate strategies that can be used in communicating with limited-English-speaking children. They would also have to know how to help the child in her school curriculum.

Thus, opportunity for interaction might be provided outside the classroom between the limited-English-speaking child and a peer and between the limited-English-speaking child and an adult. Such meetings should encourage a naturalistic conversational environment. They should be flexible and should essentially be directed by the limited-English-speaking child. This might mean an academic encounter for some and a play encounter for others.[2]

5. Flexibility should be built into any program to allow for differences in learning styles, both cognitive and social, as well as differences stemming from the input and material that have to be mastered: even if she has superior cognitive abilities, the fourth or fifth grade child is going to have a more difficult task because of the sheer quantity and complexity of what she must master. And a shy fourth grader will have different needs than an outgoing, socially aggressive fourth grader.

6. Encourage the child's participation in nonacademic subjects such as music and gym and her social interaction on the playground and at lunch. However, permit the child the pressure release she may obtain by communicating in her native tongue with other limited-English-speaking children, if there are any, during any free periods. Continued development of the first language is important.

7. Maintain a personal link with the children's parents. Write the parents personal letters and invite them for parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and other activities. Use interpreters wherever they are available.

The following suggestions are made for elementary school teachers who have only a few limited-English-speaking students in their classes:

1. The teacher should carefully control her speech in the classroom. While speech should be representative of the full range of the language, the teacher can simplify her language, limit vocabulary, use repetition, expansion, and other tactics of motherese or caretaker speech.

2. The teacher should speak at a normal rate of speech and use normal intonation. However, the teacher can train herself to pause more frequently than she would in normal conversation. Pauses at natural juncture points

[2] The concept of child-directed encounter is not new. Its principles are based on Rogers' non-directive counseling and are described in Axline's 1947 publication *Play Therapy*.

between thought groups can help to make the input comprehensible to the limited-English-speaking child.

3. The teacher should focus on the message, not the form. This means that the focus will be on communication and understanding. Brown's advice to mothers who want to facilitate their children's acquisition of language is applicable to the teacher of a limited-English-speaking child: "Believe that your child can understand more than he or she can say, and seek, above all, to communicate. To understand and be understood. To keep your minds fixed on the same target" (Brown 1977:26).

4. The teacher should keep her speech suitable for the child's cognitive development. If the teacher focuses on communication and on the subject matter of her class, this should not be difficult.

5. The teacher should provide ample opportunity for the child to obtain input and to listen. The teacher should be alert to the child's nonverbal clues and should try to ensure that the child is actively listening and is not merely silent and withdrawn.

6. The teacher should encourage spontaneous verbal expression, but she should not force verbal production from the child. The teacher should encourage verbal expression by calling on the child whenever she volunteers and by providing as many opportunities as possible for one-to-one interaction where the child may be more likely to express herself verbally.

7. The teacher can facilitate communication by using nonverbal gestures and body language. She can rely on motor activity and concentrate as much as possible on the here and now.

8. The teacher should allow the child to make mistakes. In the manner of motherese, she should affirm the truth value of a child's attempt rather than its grammatical integrity.

9. The teacher should not put the child on the spot by asking the child to answer questions that she is not likely to be able to understand.

10. The teacher should recognize that the academic skills, such as reading skills, that the child already has are likely to transfer.

11. The teacher should try to assess when the child tunes out input that is incomprehensible. This may be a good time to schedule pull-out interaction meetings for the child.

12. The teacher should treat the child as a full member of the class community and she should encourage the child to participate as best she can from the beginning. The teacher's supportive role is crucial since it can set the entire tone of the child's learning experience.

I believe my study and the recommendations derived from it show that a limited-English-speaking child in situations such as the one I observed need not be viewed as being at the mercy of a sink-or-swim approach. It is possible, even without formal bilingual education or ESL programs and without large expenditures of funds, to do creative things that can facilitate the language development of the limited-English-speaking child. Many of these can be done by the classroom teacher. This is significant since where there is no bilingual education or ESL, the role of the classroom teacher will be even more important than it would be otherwise. Finally, my approach gives full credit to

the child as an active agent in the language learning process and recognizes that child's ability to help direct the course of her learning process.

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Part 2

The Teacher

ED223084

TESOL in a Changing World: The Challenge of Teacher Education[1]

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The 1980-81 TESOL year has been one of intense activity. As I've traveled from conference to conference and discussed concerns with many of you, important issues have been raised and dealt with. *Refugee concerns* have come to the foreground of TESOL as thousands of refugees continue to arrive in this country and struggle with the barriers of language and culture. A massive effort has been launched this year to tackle the thorny issues of *professional standards and employment practices* among ESL teachers in a changing world. During the past year, the TESOL Executive Committee has become involved in a major *restructuring of the organizational networks of TESOL.* On the *sociopolitical* front, TESOL has for the first time in its history employed – in cooperation with some other allied professional organizations – a full-time lobbyist in Washington. In the last year alone, dedicated TESOLers in state affiliates around the country have won major battles in the fight for *certification* of ESL. There are now 19 states in the United States with ESL certification or endorsement and 25 with bilingual education certification. In the last year or two, TESOL has become increasingly sensitive to its *international* character. There are now 16 international affiliates of TESOL, and a growing proportion of the total TESOL membership comes from countries other than the United States.

The growth of the profession

This remarkable level of professional activity is a sign of the continued, dynamic growth of the TESOL profession. Three years ago, at the Mexico City TESOL Convention (Brown 1978), I referred to the development of the TESOL profession in terms of the underlying and supporting research characteristic of a growing field of study. I compared the development of the discipline to human ego development, in which we progress from early stages of immature ego awareness to an adult state of mature, secure self-awareness. In the development of the TESOL profession, we can identify three such stages.

The early years – the 40s, 50s, and possibly early 60s, before TESOL as a professional society had been formed – were years which saw ESL in its "infancy" in many respects. There was little "self-awareness;" the ego boundaries of TESOL were unclear. ESL teaching tended to blend with foreign language

[1]Presented at a plenary session.

teaching in general. Pedagogical, psychological, and linguistic theories were modeled and imitated. There was little questioning of existing paradigms as we clung somewhat naïvely and dependently to other disciplines.

But there was an essence there, a profession being formed, and perhaps that essence was most dramatically embodied forty years ago in the establishment by Charles Fries of the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan. Charles Fries' "aural-oral" approach, or the "Michigan Method," was something special. This brainchild of Fries was to become distinguished from foreign language "Army methods" and the—at that time—"newfangled" Audiolingual Method. TEFL was born and here to stay.

A second stage in the life of TESOL can be seen in the first decade or so of the TESOL organization's existence. In 1966 the profession, now having reached adolescence, was ready for a coming-out party—bar mitzvah time for Charles Fries' brainchild. That year a professional society called Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages was formed. The adolescent years of TESOL were active but often stormy. With growing specialized research on learning English as a second language, TESOL began to distinguish itself from psychology, linguistics, and foreign language teaching. But there was the defensiveness of adolescent insecurity as we lashed out in harsh criticism of theories and methods around us. A couple of the keynote journal articles of the day bore titles like: "On the irrelevance of transformational grammar..." and "The failure of the discipline of linguistics in language teaching." Contrastive analysis was passé, cognitive approaches were pitted against behavioristic, and even the relevance of *teaching* was questioned! It was a period of defensive justification for TESOL.

Today I like to think that TESOL is in a new stage, a stage of maturing adulthood. TESOL has a distinct self-awareness and self-identity. This identity is found in the merging of at least three factors: (1) the building of solid theoretical foundations of language learning and language teaching (see Brown 1980a for a comprehensive explication of these theoretical foundations); (2) the development of effective teaching approaches, methods, techniques, and materials; and (3) the increasing demand for English as an international language both in the United States and abroad. This third stage of TESOL is marked by intense, complex, but nondefensive research. The research is creative and researchers are aware of their limitations. An interdisciplinary perspective is present as we have at last learned that second language acquisition is not bound to one discipline; rather, the best theories of second language acquisition require the intelligent integration of the best of all the disciplines which study human behavior. In mature, self-confident achievement, we have moved beyond the stage of pre-adolescent rebellion against other disciplines.

Teacher education in a changing world

In 1981, we are looking at a world that has changed immeasurably, in every respect, from the world of 40 years ago. In fact, even ten years ago the TESOL world was a vastly different one. Worldwide sociopolitical and sociolinguistic

changes have thrust ESL into the forefront of international and intercultural communication on a shrinking globe. In 1979, the President's Commission on Foreign Languages reminded us that Americans, to be sure, are tongue-tied and culture-bound. But beneath that message lies the implication that English has become an international language. Strevens (1980) notes that there are now 375 million nonnative speakers of English in the world and 674 million total English users. He reminds us that the day will soon come when there are as many as a billion English users! ESL is in demand everywhere. That puts tremendous responsibilities on our shoulders! TESOL and TESOLers everywhere now have a responsibility to carry out a very important mission. And not only do we have that responsibility, but *we also have sufficient pedagogical, linguistic, psychological, and sociocultural know-how* to carry out that mission successfully.

In recognizing that responsibility, there are some urgent questions that we must pose. One of those questions is: are teachers of ESL adequately equipped to carry out the mission? That is, have we sufficiently met the challenge of *teacher education* in this changing but diversified world?

In attempting an answer to that question, I will deal with five areas of concern: (1) What is the role of the *teacher* in education and in language education in particular? (2) What are the *needs* in ESL teacher education today—the diverse contexts within which teachers must function? (3) How can our *pre-service* teacher education programs—that is, Master's programs—best meet these diverse needs? (4) How can the role of *in-service* education be enhanced to further meet these needs? Finally, (5) what will TESOL as an organization *do* about it?

1. Focus on the teacher

What is the role of the teacher in education and in language education? The research and development in our field over the past decade or so has given us some firm foundations of theory and practice. Much of this research has focused on the nature of the *learner* in second language acquisition. We have discovered quite a number of learner factors in the successful acquisition of ESL. We know something about learner strategies, how learners perceive the cognitive task of language learning, how they will deal with a native language and second language in contact. We have identified learner personality factors—how a person's egocentric self and social self can affect one's success in language learning. And we are discovering more and more about how culture and language interact in the learner to make second language learning a cultural process.

We also have developed an astounding array of published materials in the field. There are materials for every age, every level of proficiency, every skill, and every special purpose. Two years ago, Joan Morley (1979) gave us an excellent set of challenges to be met in the domain of materials development.

And we cannot forget that the past decade has produced a rather diverse number of teaching methodologies for presumably every occasion. Not long ago, we were rather vaguely looking for some answer to the shortcomings of

audiolingual or oral-aural approaches; now we are faced with a host of "methods" purporting to foster language success: Community Language Learning, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, the Comprehensive Approach, Suggestopedia, not to mention various adaptations of the Direct Method, Grammar Translation, and Cognitive Code.

In all this research and development, has there been adequate focus on the *teacher*? To be sure, Earl Stevick, Charles Curran, John Fanselow, and others have delivered their messages loud and clear: "teachers make all the difference!" But in some respects we still know comparatively little about the role of the teacher. Logically, our study of good language *learners* should lead us to a study of good language *teachers*. The *teacher* is the single most crucial determiner of language success in classroom learning. As the number of learner variables mystifies us, as textbooks proliferate, and as methods rise up only to be criticized to death, it is the *teacher* who, in the last analysis, makes the difference. And that's you and me – the "T" in TESOL. Learners, materials, and methods come and go, but teachers live on forever.

What does psychological learning theory tell us about the function of the teacher in the process of learning? A study of learning theories ranging from B. F. Skinner (a behaviorist) to David Ausubel (a cognitivist) to Carl Rogers (a humanist) reveals, in all, the significant role of the teacher. It was B. F. Skinner, however, who gave us the most explicit model of learning in his operant conditioning model, also known as "reinforcement theory."

In Skinner's operant conditioning model, two distinctive features emerge: (1) the strongest, most desirable behavior is *emitted* behavior, that is, responses which are not externally *elicited* but which arise out of an internal, self-motivated stimulus, and (2) positive rewards of desired behavior are stronger than negative, or punishing, reinforcement.

In our ESL classes, emitted responses are those self-motivated, freely offered spoken, written, or comprehension acts. The teacher's verbal or nonverbal feedback is the reinforcement that will reward (or punish) the learner. (For a a more detailed discussion of teacher feedback, see Brown 1980b.)

What does the Skinnerian model say about the role of the teacher? First, the model tells us how exclusively important are those *reinforcing* responses that a teacher gives to the verbal operants *emitted* by the learners. Everything that a teacher says and does reinforces something. Those reinforcers, as they accumulate through days and weeks and months of classroom instruction, become the crucial determiners of the long-term success of the second language teacher. They are perhaps more crucial than all the best-laid plans of methods, techniques, textbooks, and other prepared material. (At this point I should note that while Skinner deemphasizes the role of the stimulus in the control of behavior, he in no way rules out the important influence of good materials (see, for example, Skinner 1968). Prepared material, in the Skinnerian sense, serves not so much to goad or prod but through careful design to reinforce the learner along scientifically constructed pathways to success.) But in language learning the best learning takes place in the very act of free, meaningful communication – *emitted* behavior – where there is little

that can be *predicted*. The teacher must therefore be prepared, for every operant which a learner emits, to give optimal forms of feedback.

By "optimal," I mean neither too much nor too little, neither too bland nor too threatening. That's often a difficult compromise to reach. Some time ago, a group of high school students from the French club at the high school came to my door selling candy to support their club. Delighted with the apparent enthusiasm of this group of young language learners, I broke into my own French: "C'est très bien, alors, vous parlez un petit peu de français! Entrez s'il vous plaît." Nonplussed at this unexpected response, the students quizzically looked at me, then at each other, and without saying a word, embarrassingly left my front doorstep, never to be seen again! I never found out whether they really were from the French club, though I expect they were. My response unintentionally turned out to be threatening and alienating instead of reinforcing.

If we were to take a closer look at other theories of learning, we would discover that even in the most *non*directive of teacher roles, there is an overpowering sense of urgency on the part of the teacher nevertheless to *direct* learning.

Now some people may still wish to contend that the learner should be left to his devices, as it were, and learn without the benefit—or interference—of teachers. There are those who have mastered a second language in untutored contexts, but there are many others who have not. My favorite example of a teacherless attempt to learn a foreign language was the case of François Gouin, a French teacher of Latin in the later 19th century (I'm grateful to Diller (1971) for his account of Gouin's frustrations). Professeur Gouin took a sabbatical leave one year and decided to go to Germany in order to learn German.

> He thought that the quickest way to master German would be to memorize a German grammar book and a table of 248 irregular German verbs. It took him only ten days of concentrated effort to do this in the isolation of his room. Proud of his accomplishment he hurried to the academy to test his new power in German. 'But alas!', he writes, 'in vain did I strain my ears; in vain my eye strove to interpret the slightest movements of the lips of the professor; in vain I passed from the first classroom to a second; not a word, not a single word would penetrate to my understanding.' (Diller 1971:51)

The failure did not deter Gouin from pursuing his goal. He felt that what he now needed was a similar mastery over the German roots. In eight days, Gouin memorized 800 German roots *and* digested again the grammar book and 248 irregular verbs. Off he went to the academy. "But alas!," he writes, "not a single word. . ."

Gouin was a stubborn type and not about to give up. In the course of the next eight months he tried a pronunciation approach, a translation approach, memorizing dialogues, reading German literature, and even learning 30,000 words in the dictionary! Each time, however, Gouin writes, "But alas!"

After one year, Gouin finally returned home to France—a failure in second language acquisition. But the story has a happy ending. Upon his return home to France, he discovered that while he was gone his three-year-old nephew had, in that year, learned to speak French! Gouin thus took it upon himself to try to discover the secrets of child language learning and applied his findings to what is now a forgotten language teaching method, the Series Method, which was so revolutionary a method that it was never taken seriously. Gouin was a hundred years ahead of his peers.

Nevertheless, the Gouin anecdote does illustrate for us the fact that surely we teachers want to spare our learners the anguish that Gouin experienced trying to learn German. The teacher is an *enabler*. It is not at all inconceivable that if but one teacher had enabled Gouin at the outset to perceive principles of second language learning, he might have replaced his failures with success.

2. Teacher education needs

At the San Francisco TESOL Convention, Virginia French Allen chaired a plenary session titled "TESOL and articulation between teacher training and public education" (see Fisher et al. 1980). Three of the four panelists in the session echoed the need for teachers trained to deal with the problems of ESL in elementary education, in secondary education, and in adult education. The panelists described numerous gaps in our university teacher education programs in their provisions for specific training in the teaching of non-university students.

At the 1980 conference of the Oregon TESOL affiliate in Portland, I participated in a session on the topic of "Things the university never taught us—can they do a better job?" The session included testimony from ESL teachers at the adult, secondary, and elementary levels; all of the teachers echoed the message of the San Francisco plenary: we need better training for teachers in non-university settings. Some other needs that were voiced were for teachers who are initially (in their MA programs) better trained in (1) a broader scope of methods, (2) adapting and writing ESL materials for differing contexts, (3) specific practice in classroom management and in the use of varied forms of media, (4) more familiarity with standardized tests and with their interpretation, (5) some training in the administrative and counseling aspects of ESL teaching, and (6) simply the need for more variety in practice teaching in the Master's program.

An article in the *TESOL Quarterly* by Robert Ochsner (1980) reported on a survey in which recent MA graduates indicated specific needs—some of which were met, some of which were not—which MA programs should fulfill. In the 1979 *On TESOL* volume, there was an article by Neufeld and Webb on the need for "a complete curriculum" in teacher education programs—one which is specifically focused on ESL as distinguished from foreign language and bilingual education training.

The Oregon and San Francisco sessions and the articles by Ochsner and by Neufeld and Webb are but a few examples of an international call for more

relevance and effectiveness in our teacher education programs. In response to this call, a group of TESOL administrators (chairs and directors of Masters programs in TESOL) met together at the 1981 TESOL Convention in an effort to identify further needs and to begin to find ways to meet these needs. Among the topics covered were: the MA curriculum, standardization of degree programs, practice teaching, ESL certification, entrance requirements, and employment of MA graduates.

Other sessions at the 1981 TESOL Convention have signaled needs in the preparation of ESL teachers around the world. The very division of the Special Interest Groups of TESOL is an indication of at least seven domains of TESOL which need to be addressed in our teacher education efforts: Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Adult Education, Higher Education, Bilingual Education, Standard English as a Second Dialect, and a whole set of issues implied in the interest group titled Teaching English Abroad. The work of two TESOL committees relates directly to the teacher education mission of TESOL. The Employment Issues Committee has, among other things, been concerned with the tremendous variety of ESL teaching jobs around the world and with the preparedness of teachers to deal with varying ages, levels, skills, and special purposes. And the Schools and Universities Coordinating Committee has been actively concerned about achieving certification for ESL in many of the states of the United States. How well are our teacher education programs geared to certification guidelines? To what extent do university educators communicate with the public school sector and with those in state legislatures who will ultimately rule on ESL certification?

The needs and challenges in teacher education abound. Are we meeting the challenge?

3. Pre-service education

In the current TESOL Directory of Teacher Training Programs (Blatchford, 1979), there are 65 Master's programs listed for the United States and Canada. Typically, such programs (1) take about a year and a half to complete, (2) require no specialized undergraduate preparation, (3) involve three or four courses in TESL methods, materials, and theory, and (4) a minimal amount of practice teaching. The program is usually rounded out with presumably relevant courses in linguistics, English, and/or education. How adequate are these Master's programs in terms of the needs which we must meet in the changing world of the 1980s?

In 1975, TESOL adopted an official statement of Guidelines for the Certification and Preparation of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages in the United States. That statement still stands as an excellent set of criteria for teacher education programs. However, it is clear from a study of Master's programs in North America that the guidelines are not being followed in all 65 institutions. Nor are the needs already referred to being met in many of our teacher education programs.

As we continue to mature in our professional adulthood, teacher preparation programs for the 80s need to improve in four major areas in order to meet

the challenges ahead. These areas of concern comprise our TESOL teacher education agenda for the future.

(i) *Selection*. The first area requiring some reform in pre-service education is that of selection—or the entry criteria of students entering MA programs. One side of the issue focuses on the undergraduate preparation of MA candidates. For many years now, MA-TESL programs have accepted *any* undergraduate major and only a handful of programs have prerequisite courses to the degree. Given the sophistication of the TESOL profession in the 80s, it is becoming increasingly difficult to prepare teachers professionally in a one to one-and-a-half year program. At the University of Illinois, we have just revised our MA-TESL curriculum to entail two full years (including summers) of coursework and student teaching, with a prerequisite course in linguistics. Even that seems inadequate, in some respects, to fully prepare a teacher for the complexities of the present day.

Another side of the issue of selection of students lies in the *market* for ESL teachers. Are MA programs being realistic in continuing to take in record-breaking enrollments each year? Are there a sufficient number of adequate jobs "out there" for our graduates? The profession needs to take a careful look at supply-and-demand—a concern which has been studied by the Committee on Employment Issues this past year. Would universities be more prudent to raise admission standards and thereby lower the number of graduates each year? This is an exceedingly important issue as we seek to maintain high standards in a growing profession.

(ii) *Comprehensive curriculum*. Are teacher education curricula sufficiently comprehensive in their specialized offerings in TESL? A few months ago, a professor in another university wrote to me and informed me that his department was about to offer a TESL specialization in their MA degree. He admitted that he was the only faculty member in the department who had any substantial expertise in TESL theory and practice, but that his own knowledge wasn't that sophisticated, and would I please send him course syllabuses for some of the specialized courses in TESL which we teach at the University of Illinois! This was an astounding request. I wonder if graduates from that program will be fully equipped with a *comprehensive* grasp of theoretical and practical issues in TESL? I think it's safe to say they will not. While there is no mechanism to prevent any university from offering such a degree, surely it is time for the TESOL profession to exercise leadership and explicit guidance in the fulfilling of the guidelines for teacher education already established by TESOL.

Teacher education programs which meet the conditions of the TESOL Guidelines and which are sensitive to the growing dimensions of the profession are characterized by a broad spectrum of specialized courses exclusively designed for ESL teachers. Course offerings include a comprehensive coverage of "ESL-specific" theory of language learning and language teaching, of the phonological, grammatical, semantic aspects of English, and of methods of teaching various ESL skills, at various levels, at various ages, and for various contexts.

The teacher education programs of the 80s need to involve the future teacher in actual practice *beyond university contexts* along with the now traditional university practice teaching. It is essential that university programs be sensitive to the needs of teachers seeking state certification in ESL as such certification becomes adopted by more and more states in the United States. At the present time, the University of Illinois is seeking direct practice teaching experience for our MA candidates in four different contexts in the Urbana-Champaign community: elementary school teaching in a multilingual program, secondary school teaching in an Urbana high school, adult education teaching in Urbana, and teaching in a center for the retraining of Southeast Asian refugees in Champaign. This is only a beginning, of course, but such "real-life" experiences are going to form an essential aspect of TESL programs in the near future. Without them, we will be irresponsible in ignoring the fast-growing need for ESL teachers trained to deal with various non-university contexts.

(iii) *Faculty expertise.* A third aspect of pre-service programs for the future is a consideration of faculty expertise. Those of us on the faculties of university programs need to be prepared to undergo retraining ourselves. I was not trained in a public school or adult education context; there are new developments taking place in the field every day about which I know very little. I need to be constantly educating myself in becoming sensitized to new needs in the changing world of TESOL and in being willing to redevelop or retool wherever necessary.

(iv) *Employment services.* Finally, in our program for the future, pre-service programs used to include quality service to candidates in finding employment upon graduation. Are faculty and administrators of all 65 MA programs bearing the responsibility of helping students in specific ways to find employment upon graduation? We are willing to write letters by and large, but do we actively seek out opportunities, make them known in a systematic way to our students, offer to them periodic formal training in job finding, and keep the particular expertise of particular students in mind as we encounter employers in the field and make recommendations? I wonder if there aren't some teacher education programs where assistance in job finding amounts to a rather haphazardly organized bulletin board in the departmental office. Are we taking the personal interest in our students that they deserve?

A final note on pre-service programs: Can universities, with all our bureaucracy, our publish-or-perish mentality, and our budget-cutting deans sufficiently meet the challenge of teacher education? In the San Francisco TESOL's panel already mentioned, Russell Campbell (1980) offered his "view from the university" in response to the panelists' earlier remarks. His "view" was at one point rather cautious about the ability of universities, given academic, logistic, and budgetary constraints, to respond adequately to the need to meet the particular challenge of training teachers for public school education. Yes, there *are* difficulties—difficulties which won't be overcome tomorrow—but we will work in each university context for the meeting of the demands of the changing world of TESOL. By insistence on profes-

sional standards and on quality education for teachers, *we shall overcome* those obstacles that lie before us!

4. In-service education

My final comments are directed now, perhaps all too briefly, to one of the most if not *the* most important features of teacher education: in-service education. Clearly, the best teachers are those who continue their education throughout their professional lives. But haven't we assumed—perhaps too often—that once the teacher walks out of the university with an MA degree, that teacher is no longer the university's responsibility? In the TESOL 1980 plenary panel on university/public school articulation, one of the panelists, Vicki Gunther of the Chicago Board of Education, called for a "partnership of educators" in which the theoretical expertise of the university is combined with the practical experience of the public schools in offering vastly improved in-service education for teachers in the schools.

At the present time, TESOL in-service education has become the domain of the TESOL affiliates in many regions of the world. For this valuable service, the affiliate organizations are to be heartily congratulated. And TESOL encourages the continuation of such periodic in-service workshops and institutes. But we surely need to encourage more participation by university faculty in a team effort. Wherever there is an MA-TESL program there should be faculty who can provide some in-service training. Our agenda for the future can be the encouragement—I daresay the mandating—of the partnership of educators called for at the 1980 TESOL Convention.

Conclusion: TESOL's agenda for teacher education

It is easy to come up with high-sounding rhetoric. It is easy for me to say what "should" be done. Some of you can give yourselves a pat on the back for what is already being done in your case. Others will get angry at me for trying to tell you what you should do. But I am determined to see that some official *action* is taken to begin to work toward three objectives: (1) to study the basic needs within teacher education today, (2) to make specific TESOL-endorsed recommendations for quality teacher education that meets the demands of the profession both theoretically and practically, and (3) to enact some mechanism for helping universities to structure and restructure their teacher education programs.

I have begun that process by communicating these concerns with the TESOL Executive Committee, by discussing issues with these TESOL administrators present at the session at the 1981 TESOL Convention and encouraging, among that group, future plans which include some explicit action, and I have asked the Schools and Universities Coordinating Committee to place on their 1981-82 agenda the challenge of teacher education in a changing TESOL world. With your help—teachers of ESL around the world, and with your help—teachers of teachers in the universities, we will meet these challenges.

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ED223085

Motivation: Its Crucial Role in Language Learning[1]

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Motivation is a term often extolled as the key to learning but just as often misunderstood. While everyone would agree that motivation should be fostered and sustained, there has been little consensus on the What, When, Why, and How which teachers must have to ensure that students will maintain the drive, the interest, and the desire to persevere in spite of the hurdles and plateaus which lie in the path of language learning.

Contrary to some popular misconceptions, motivation is not *either* extrinsic or intrinsic, or, if you prefer, instrumental or integrative; it is not something that is fostered only during the first half hour of the academic year; it does not depend solely on the learner's aptitude, personality, or learning strategies. Motivation stems rather from positive learner and teacher attitudes which should permeate every stage of the learning process if this process is to lead to pleasure and success in language acquisition. Motivation is the feeling nurtured primarily by the classroom teacher in the learning situation as he or she engages in carefully planned as well as empirical and intuitive practices which will satisfy one or more of the basic, universal, cognitive, and affective human needs identified by psychologists such as Maslow: the need for survival, belonging, identity, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

I am not suggesting that teachers should be unaware of sound theoretical bases derived from linguistics, sociology, anthropology, and other sciences. What I am suggesting is that we devote more attention to the study of characteristics within the teacher, the learners, and the community in which they live and in which the learning institution is located—the real, human factors which may well have a greater impact on learning than the most rigorously constructed scientific theory.

How can the teacher develop the interest and attitudes needed to sustain motivation? Why is it that our students' initial motivation very often wanes quickly? I will briefly try to answer these questions.

In order to do so, I will use the term *motivation* itself as a mnemonic device and note what each letter suggests to me with respect to language acquisition. Unfortunately, I can make only fleeting references to topics that warrant hours of discussion, and I can mention only a few of the concepts or procedures that each letter suggests. (I could, for example, have used the letter *A* as a reminder of such terms as *aptitude* and *aspiration*, rather than *attitude*.) Keeping these reservations in mind, I will turn to our mnemonic.

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[1]I am grateful to Mary Hines for asking me to present this paper. (She had heard a shorter version in Budapest, Hungary, when she was a visiting Fulbright Lecturer.) I wish to express my appreciation also to Ms. Anne Newton, Editor of the *English Teaching Forum*, for permitting me to use several portions of the paper she published in a Forum Issue.

The letter *M* reminds us of studies by Wallace Lambert, and his colleagues on instrumental and integrative *motivation*. *Instrumental motivation* refers primarily to the learner's desire to acquire the language as an instrument of communication, which may lead to better grades in school, to better-paid employment, and to upward social mobility. *Integrative motivation* relates to the learner's desire to be accepted by the speakers of the foreign or second language and to be identified with them. Where feasible, we should foster both types of motivation. However, in many places throughout the world where there exist few native English speakers and no electric current for radio, tapes, or TV, integrative motivation is difficult to achieve. In this regard, I was happy to read an article by G. Richard Tucker recently in which he cautions educators against replicating experimentation which has been carried out in totally different sociocultural circumstances.

A half century or more ago, educators distinguished between *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* motivation. *Extrinsic* motivation, the desire to do well on an examination or in a class recitation, will often become intrinsic when the learner experiences a feeling of confidence and achievement as a result of successful performance. A primary responsibility of teachers—and I have seen thousands of them perform this miracle—is to transform an initial extrinsic motivation into a permanent intrinsic one.

M, of course, also stands for *methodology*. Our methodology must be flexible and eclectic, *not* dogmatic or prescriptive. Language teaching has been set back 50 years and student motivation stifled by adherence to such statements as: *Reading must be deferred for X number of years*, or *Dialogues must be memorized*, or *Translation must be banned*, or *We must never talk about the language*—statements with little consideration given to such important factors as the age and affective needs of the learners and the objectives of the program. Methodology, moreover, must be compatible with the time available, the aptitude and interests of the learners, and the personality and preparation of the teacher.

However, despite what people seem to think, eclectic does not mean haphazard. Eclecticism implies the careful selection of facets of various methods and their integration into a cohesive, coherent procedure. This must be in harmony with the teacher's personality, the students' needs, and strategies for learning, as well as the aspirations of the community. An example of an eclectic approach to foreign language learning is a functional-notional curriculum. In this most recent addition to current approaches, the learner's communicative purpose is considered to be of central importance. Subordinate, although still crucial, are the choice and presentation of grammatical, situational, and thematic aspects related to the speaker's or writer's purpose. To these are added basic tenets of semantic and humanistic theory which will certainly be motivating when learners feel that they can choose among several alternatives to express their purpose (a principle of semantic theory) and, as important, when they feel valued and respected as human beings. It is interesting to note that the hierarchy of needs identified by Maslow and others is the basis for syllabus design in some functional-notional materials.

Allow me to continue with the letter *M*. The *meaning* of everything the learner hears and says must be made crystal clear to him through pictures or other aids and through the use of the mother tongue in situations where this is feasible. The mother tongue should be used without hesitation in the classroom when comprehension fails, when the learners are frustrated or are merely repeating in rote fashion. Of course there should be a gradual phasing out of the learners' native tongue as soon as their competence in English increases. On the other hand, students should always be encouraged to ask questions such as "How do we say X in English?".

The teacher should lead the students very gradually in small incremental steps to *mastery* through varied activities and experiences, never, except in rare instances, through memorization. Nor should we insist on mastery prematurely. We must learn to be satisfied with the gradual unfolding of the learner's potential to acquire English, through such techniques as the use of a spiral approach in lesson or unit planning, peer teaching, exposure to a variety of comprehensible materials, and opportunities to say or write increasingly longer sentences.

The letter *O* may represent *objectives*. I believe it would be appropriate to say that the primary goal of language teaching today is to help the learner use language fluently in the multiple functions it serves in real life and to develop his communicative competence; that is, to enable him to understand and produce language that is not only correct but also appropriate and acceptable in the social situations in which it is generally used. In order to achieve such a goal, the curriculum should include not only provisions for a discussion of the elements—people, places, time, topics—in the situation, but also the study of language varieties or registers and of nonlinguistic features such as distances between speakers, facial expressions, and unarticulated sounds normally used in spoken communication. The curriculum should provide for activities that stimulate learners to express themselves—to clarify and classify their thoughts, to agree, disagree, express love, anger, and any other human emotion—as well as to interact with others. The curriculum should also give practice in language needed to direct or to create sentences, stories, songs, poetry, or essays. It is no longer enough to teach the forms of linguistic items; we must also make students aware of the contexts and the situations—in other words, the dimensions of experience—in which the forms would be used by native speakers.

I cannot subscribe to the dogmatic emphasis on *performance objectives*, which holds that a specific body of knowledge must be acquired in a certain way within a prescribed time limit. Although some writers contend that performance objectives tell the student exactly what is expected of him, such objectives discount more important psychological factors which may cause unnecessary tension in the student. As we know, all human beings have different styles and different rhythms of learning. Only the perceptive teacher can pause, turn back when necessary, and realize merely by looking at the student when fatigue or anxiety may hamper learning and reduce motivation.

Teachers, schools, and education officials should continually ask: Are these objectives realistic for this age group, in this community, with these learners,

and within the time available? Are they valuable to the students not only in the future but also today? If not, how can we modify them?

The comments I might make under the letter *T* should be concerned primarily with the *teacher*—but, it is obvious that the role of the teacher permeates my entire paper. Can we gainsay that the moment of truth—the enhancement of motivation—occurs when the teacher closes the classroom door, greets his students with a warm, welcoming smile, and proceeds to interact with various individuals by making comments or asking questions which indicate personal concern? Therefore, I use the letter *T* for the term *technique*.

We could spend hours discussing techniques which have been tried in many parts of the world and which have been found to be effective in motivating students. Let me enumerate a handful which I found particularly stimulating because they satisfy one or more of our students' cognitive or affective needs. Try engaging the learners' interest by doing some of the following:

(1) Relate the presentation and practice of any communicative, grammatical, or lexical item or the reading and writing of any passage to their cultural and language knowledge and to their experiences.

(2) Make them consciously aware of redundancy clues in English as an aid in listening, speaking, reading, or writing.

(3) Help them to guess word meanings from the relevant context or from the situation of the conversation or passage. If this is difficult or impossible, give or have someone else give the native language equivalent or encourage them to use a class dictionary.

(4) Enable them to understand the communicative message under a surface statement. For example, "Is that your new car?" may express admiration or anger depending upon the situation in which it is said and the intonation used.

(5) Use the spiral approach in presentation and practice. For example, do not give 15 ways of making a request in one lesson even in your university classes. Give one or two and return to them and give other alternatives in subsequent lessons.

(6) With relation to the above proceed from the simple to the more complex utterances used to express a thought or function. Begin with nonverbal messages and move to simple verbal ones starting, where possible, with the utterance you would use in expressing a function or concept. You should not hesitate to follow this principle even if you are not a native speaker of English.

(7) Give the learners extensive practice in paraphrasing—in using alternatives for communicative expressions, structures, or lexical items as they will seldom if ever meet the same dialogue sequence again.

(8) Help them to learn the reason for switching the language variety in a dialogue or passage. Help them also to produce different varieties, by changing one or more elements in the situation under discussion.

(9) Help them to play different roles in text or teacher prepared dialogues and later in realistic scenes created by individuals, pairs, or groups. Do not, however, ask them to engage in spontaneous role play without building up to that stage in carefully graded steps.

(10) Enable them to recognize and use cognates in learning situations where such use is possible. A suggestion: place these on the chalkboard under each other so that similarities of form will be immediately visible.

(11) Engage in small group practice, in paired practice, and in individual instruction when these are practicable and/or necessary in your teaching situation.

(12) Correct errors tactfully when there is a breakdown in comprehension or when you are engaging the class in a chain drill or other repetitive task. You might wish merely to say "listen" and follow that with the model. You could ask another student to give the answer or repeat the model but I would do that only if peer relationships in the class are good and noncompetitive.

(13) When engaging in listening comprehension of a connected text at beginning and intermediate levels you may need to adapt the passage or dialogue in three stages to produce a less complex text: (a) Use simple, active, declarative sentences, omitting adjectives, adverbs and complex sentences, while still keeping the basic message authentic. Ask for yes/no or true/false responses; (b) In the second stage, reinsert the adjectives and adverbs. With this version, use WH questions, asking for utterances, not complete sentences. (We know that complete sentences follow naturally from questions such as 'What did X do yesterday?'); (c) In the third stage, introduce the original passage and use the questions above as well as inferential questions, e.g. 'Why do you think that?', 'How do you know that?'.

(14) With further reference to listening comprehension, two other suggestions may be in order: repeat or have the learners hear the same tape of a dialogue or role play at least three times. Stop the tape or your reading at several points, asking questions which become increasingly more complex and require longer answers; for example, 'Who is talking?', 'What are X and Y talking about?', 'What does X want Y to do?', 'Do they agree?'. Later you may add 'What did Y say? Use his exact words,' 'What did you hear X say?' (Ask for indirect speech: X said that. . . . .).

(15) Try to get authentic materials, such as newspapers, magazines, journals, ads, and time-tables. Duplicate relevant parts and have them used for pair or group practice. Use the same piece of material over the semester for a variety of language-producing activities. In addition to saving your time, such multiple use is motivating since the students' expectation of familiar structure or vocabulary will help them to eventually recall those without effort and will result in increased fluency.

(16) Help the students themselves (over the age of about eleven) discover the rule underlying the form and use of a structural item, a communicative expression, or a communicative formula by placing examples on the chalkboard, underlining the forms and using arrows from key words to their referents. After your oral model, ask questions eliciting the oral and written form, position, function, and meaning of the expression or structure.

(17) Teach lexical items which are related to the learners' environment and probable experiences as well as to their needs for survival, and for their academic, vocational, or professional purposes.

(18) Divide material such as dialogues or reading into two parallel streams: one for global comprehension only and the other for gradual mastery. As quickly as feasible, learners should be helped to understand and read interesting, meaningful material although they may have only a global comprehension of it and even though some of the structures within it will not be presented for active production for several days or months. (I consider this stream 1, the most important one for motivation.) At the same time, of course, learners will be systematically but gradually introduced to the phonemes of the language, inflections and derivations, word order, sound-symbol relationships, words which may or must co-occur, and other significant items of the English language.

(19) Make use of an interdisciplinary, broadly based curricular approach not only in English for Special Purposes classes but in all classes, for several reasons: (a) in countries such as Great Britain, the United States and others where English is the language of the school and community, to enable the learners to enter the mainstream; (b) to make them aware that English is an instrument of learning and communication as is their native tongue; and (c) to give them interesting topics gleaned from several curricular areas to talk and ask about.

(20) Set realistic tasks and activities which can be accomplished within a reasonable time and which will indicate that you have an awareness (a) of the learners' communities and resources; (b) of the fact that English may not be their only school subject; (c) as is true in many situations that they may never hear English outside your classroom; and (d) that their cultural taboos may make certain tasks impossible to perform.

(21) Make sure that in presenting new materials numerous receptive (recognition) activities precede your request for production or "creativity."

Important, too, is to learn to be content with compound bilingualism, particularly with older persons. We can no longer insist on coordinate bilingualism and especially on perfect pronunciation. Both for cognitive and affective reasons, we should recognize that—except for the highly gifted or the fortunate learners who have wide access to native speakers and taped materials—our learners will generally speak a Chinese, an Indian, or an Italian English.

Moving on from techniques and the letter *T*, I shall use the letter *I* for the terms *involvement* and *integration*. The need for *involving* students in all phases of the program is of central importance in sustaining motivation. The strengths and weaknesses of individual students should be considered when we assign class tasks and homework, as we vary their roles in groups and as we ensure that each one participates in every lesson to the best of his ability. We must, for example, realize that some students may never be capable of writing a "free" composition on an abstract topic. Nor would they be able to do so in their native language.

We should also rid ourselves of the outworn notion that listening and reading are passive communication abilities. On the contrary, both listening and reading require the most active involvement on the part of the student.

The term *integration* refers to several notions:

(1) The teacher will help students realize that all levels of language—phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, and cultural—are integrated, that is, interrelated, in every act of communication. Essential in bringing about this awareness is the deliberate reintroduction of the linguistic or cultural elements acquired at earlier learning levels or in previous lessons. Students gain a feeling of achievement as they meet, recognize, and produce known language in wider contexts or in different, appropriate social situations with increasing fluency.

(2) The same text or passage should be used to engage learners in integrated listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities.

(3) Communicative purposes, situational elements, grammatical structures, and specific notions, that is, vocabulary items, are integrated in a notional-functional or communicative approach to produce the utterances in even the most simple message.

(4) More important than the above three points is the teacher's pivotal responsibility to imbue the students with the confidence and self-esteem which will ensure that they will retain or develop the emotional security and well-integrated personality that will color and influence their entire lives.

The letter *V* is of paramount concern. The *values* that we help students acquire as they learn to use linguistic and cultural insights for real-world communication will remain with them long after they may have forgotten an irregular past participle. Students should be helped to appreciate the universality of the human experience, and their own culture and values as well as other people's.

Our goal should be not merely to make learners bicultural—increasing their awareness of their culture and that of English speakers—but rather to help them perceive, accept, and respect cultural pluralism. Concentrating on similarities among peoples rather than on differences will have a more far-reaching and positive psychological effect on learners than the invidious comparisons that often characterize the teaching of culture. Our hope for a pluralistic and harmonious world lies in helping our students realize that they are members of a world community which transcends individual and national boundaries.

In order to achieve this objective, we must start by recognizing and reinforcing their sense of identity by giving them pride in their own language and culture, and continue the process by teaching them the polite and tentative language which should be used to disagree or express uncertainty and by helping them—in carefully selected tasks—to make moral and ethical choices.

The letter *A* is also multi-faceted. The *attitudes* of the students, the teachers, community members, peers, and others with whom the student comes into contact all affect motivation to some extent, but it is the attitude of the teacher toward the student and toward his profession that is the essence and core of motivation. Is the teacher enthusiastic, empathetic, patient, well prepared? Does he respect each student's individuality? Does he show a sensitive awareness of the language, the culture, the educational system of the

student's country of origin as well as of any problems which may exist in the community?

The letter *A* reminds us also that teachers should plan a wide gamut of *activities* for each lesson: I would say a minimum of five different ones for each class hour. Such activities should give students the feeling that they are achieving and making perhaps slow but nonetheless definite progress toward communicative competence.

A also stands for the educational term *articulation*. Articulation has two important dimensions: vertical and horizontal. *Vertical articulation* ensures that the student's progress from one learning level to the next is continuous and smooth. The teacher should provide for the review of material learned at lower levels and for the preparation of students for subsequent levels.

Horizontal articulation is particularly necessary when students in secondary schools and universities are taught pronunciation or reading or grammar by different teachers since this separation might preclude an appreciation of the interrelations among these different skills. An interdisciplinary approach as well as the integration of disparate linguistic or cultural items into meaningful acts of communication would also come under the heading of horizontal articulation. Under this heading too would be placed the primary responsibility of the teacher of English for Special Purposes in so-called 'pull-out' programs in the U.S. and Great Britain who should relate the material she teaches to the subject areas the students will follow during the remainder of the school day.

T may stand for *transfer* of learning, for *translation*, for *textbooks*, and for *testing*. Let us start with transfer of learning of one linguistic item—for example, verb aspects or endings transferred to other verbs, at a beginning level. Transfer does not generally take place automatically. Unless the teacher specifically points out the common elements within the forms and, in addition, gives the students practice in using them in contexts or situations other than those in which they are presented, the majority of students will not know how and when to transfer the knowledge they have acquired. The teacher must provide models and extensive practice with verbs such as *need, want, have*, and *like*, for example, in order to ensure transfer.

I should like to mention two facts about *translation* because both seem to cause misunderstanding. First, it is perfectly normal for learners above the age of about five to think of the equivalent of a term or a structure in their native tongue as they hear the term in English. The art and skill of the teacher will be called into play in eliminating this intermediate step of translation through a variety of briskly conducted activities. Second, although I do not advocate a return to the traditional grammar-translation method, I do think it is desirable at early levels to ask students—after they have carried out all other appropriate oral drills—to give native-language equivalents of limited structural items from the target language, and vice versa. I realize that this would not be possible in classes where learners have different language backgrounds.

Where possible, however, at intermediate and advanced levels equivalents of expressions, sentences, and even paragraphs may be extremely useful. Such

practice could well lead to a saleable skill that we should help our students acquire. A total ban on translation—that is, giving equivalent expressions in the native language—is not realistic, particularly in countries where translation is feasible and is required on final examinations.

Moving to *textbooks*, we must accept the fact that the perfect textbook will never be written, especially for our learners in difficult situations. It is the teacher's responsibility to add dialogues and relevant lexical items, to change the order of exercises or of sentences within the exercises, and to modify or delete sections that might be particularly counterproductive.

Testing and evaluation of students' competence and performance, as well as of our teaching procedures, should be an integral part of the language-teaching program. I believe in frequent, brief, previously announced tests—both discrete point and integrative—designed to assess the quality and quantity of the learners' oral or written production. These formative tests will keep teachers and students informed of their progress toward the multiple goals they are expected to achieve. Parents and community leaders also have the right to know whether the schools are succeeding. I would not assign grades to all tests, however, but would use some of them as learning devices instead.

Returning again to the letter *I*, I should like to mention two issues that appear with increasing frequency in language-teaching journals: (1) *linguistic interference* and (2) *individualization of instruction*.

A great deal of experimentation is being conducted at the present time to determine whether it is solely interference *between the first language and the target language* that causes students to make errors—in other words, whether the interference is only *interlinguistic*. If the conflict *is* between (1) and (2), contrastive analyses between the native language and English would be effective in explaining errors and in determining learning priorities and emphases.

Other researchers contend that *intralinguistic* interference is equally important, and that analyses of students' oral and written errors would demonstrate that these are not necessarily caused by conflict between the first and second language. They assert that an incomplete knowledge of a linguistic class or category in the *target language* may produce false analogies and cause problems as students move toward more complete linguistic acquisition. Moreover, numerous studies on second and native language acquisition indicate that forms which are learned—either early or late—and errors which occur in the process are similar as one moves across age levels and across cultures.

All these research efforts are of crucial importance not only in order to plan for selection and gradation of material to be taught, but also to reassure teachers—who often think "mea culpa" immediately when errors are made—that such errors are normal. The teacher's reassurance of the students as well as his conscious reintroduction in lesson materials of troublesome points—whatever their origin—will enhance motivation.

In theory, *individualization* of instruction is desirable and necessary. As a teacher, however, I would protest the exaggerations which have been made by

some journals. It would be an arduous and virtually impossible task for the classroom teacher with 40 to 100 students in a class to prepare the many activities and tests that would be needed if all instruction were truly individualized. We should of course utilize the strengths and interests of individual students—in group work and individualized homework—and we should help them to overcome weaknesses through individual help and specialized materials, but we should also prepare classwide activities for a good part of each teaching lesson, especially for large classes, those below the advanced, professional levels and those held in small rooms.

I will be very brief about the letter *O*. To me it symbolizes the need for guided teacher *observation* in elementary and secondary schools, not only of other master teachers, but sometimes of less able teachers. Moreover, I have urged for years that college professors concerned with teacher training observe classes in the lower level schools. Only through direct observation can they become truly aware of the grim realities of some teaching situations. Video tape recordings are not always practical or satisfactory.

Observation also serves as a reminder of the need for the teacher to be aware of the student's quality of involvement, participation, and attitude during the class hour. The teacher should evaluate the student's progress toward goals not only in formal or normal oral and written tests but also through sensitive observation.

In discussing the last letter in our mnemonic, *N*, I should like to start with a plea that we help and indeed encourage our students to talk in English about their *native culture*. Such a procedure is psychologically sound and conducive to high motivation.

The letter *N* also stands for the entire range of the affective and cognitive *needs* of every human being. All students need to be exposed to a wide array of interesting, challenging experiences; they need to feel that they are moving forward continuously and that they are increasingly able to perceive and to integrate the experiences to which they are exposed; they need to feel secure not only in their knowledge of the foreign language and culture but in the understanding and respect of their teachers and peers. They need to feel that they belong to a group and that they can hope for many small successes; they need to enter their language classes not with fear but with a feeling of enthusiasm.

Finally, motivation for learning means not only understanding the learner, his feelings, his aspirations, and his spiritual and creative needs, but also the world that he brings with him into our classroom. A learner comes to us with a perfectly adequate language and culture. One of our major responsibilities is to help learners appreciate that we do not want to take away these precious possessions from them. We wish only to "add" another language to their abilities and help them to appreciate other cultures.

Teachers, too, have needs over and above the knowledge of linguistics, sociology, and psychology. In order to sustain their students' motivation, teachers need the courage to scrutinize, challenge, and question nonproductive theories, panaceas, or slogans. They need constantly to live a commitment to teaching and to the idea that all normal human beings can learn.

They need confidence in themselves to use their intuition and to develop their fortes. They need to have the conviction that their mission constitutes a most crucial task in any society. It is the teacher who will have the opportunity to meet and touch the minds and hearts of the majority of young people in a community.

Let me conclude by reaffirming my belief that the teacher is the crucial variable in a society. The language teacher, in particular, is aware that while teaching materials must be timely and relevant, it is infinitely more important that they be timeless and universal. He is cognizant of the fact that material should be designed not only to teach language, literature, or culture but to foster the moral, spiritual, and ethical values which can contribute to our goal of world citizenship. Education in its broadest sense means helping our learners to grow, to change, to live—in sum—to be well-integrated, secure persons. Such an education can be provided in the school situation only by caring, sensitive, humane, knowledgeable teachers. And now, a truth which has been repeated so often that it has become a cliché: While teaching is a science, it is primarily an art, which only you, the teachers, can bring into your classroom. Your enthusiasm, your dedication, your love for your profession and for your students cannot help but make every learning hour a stimulating, motivating experience, one which you and your students will look forward to with the keenest anticipation.

ED223086

Methodological Solutions to the Problems of Communicative Teaching

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1. Objections to traditional syllabuses

The last decade has seen the establishment of a consensus about what was wrong with grammatical syllabuses. Representative writers (van Ek, 1975; Wilkins, 1976; Widdowson, 1978) have advanced the view that grammatical syllabuses can only offer at best a partial account of language learning with varying degrees of sophistication. The argument, which is a strong one, goes something like this.

Grammar is a specification of the structure of a language. Learners need the language, not in order to display their knowledge of its organization, but in order to perform speech acts and to convey meanings. Furthermore, they themselves recognize this, so they will probably be more motivated to follow a syllabus which stresses performance and meaning rather than structure. Specifying a syllabus in grammatical terms is likely to lead to teachers ploughing their way systematically through an inventory of grammatical structures, whether or not students need or want them, in the interests of a comprehensive survey of the grammar. Even worse, it is probably going to result in discussion in class of grammatical terminology and an emphasis on the descriptive categories rather than language use itself. Above all, the grammatical syllabus concentrates on the organization of the language at the expense of the value of linguistic items in the operation of normal discourse. Grammar is a feature of linguistic competence, but we should be concerned with the rules of use specified by descriptions of communicative competence.

I shall be arguing in this paper that the position outlined above is legitimate insofar as it discusses syllabuses, but misleading in its relations to teaching. The elegance of the competence/communicative competence distinction has distracted our attention from the inelegant, untidier, but much more important matter of relations between teaching and syllabus specifications.

But it should be made clear at the outset that this argument is not an attack in principle on the kind of speculation which resulted in the present consensus. It is essential that speculation continue, for it is only by such attempts to assess the significance of research and theory that we shall perceive possible directions for the improvement of our practice. But such speculation, however rigorously argued, must not be confused with empirical advance. A claim that a particular approach would be interesting to pursue must not be confused with a claim that the approach should be adopted on a large scale. In this paper I shall be concerned with defining ways in which the aims of communicative teaching can be realized in classes as they actually are throughout the world, with all the administrative and professional difficulties that have to be

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coped with. Insofar as I shall use general categories, these will be categories that may be helpful to teachers thinking about their day-to-day work, rather than ones with a purity which depends on their role in a rigorous logical argument. This is not to dodge logical argument, but simply to insist during this discussion on categories which are useful even if rough, rather than tidy but comprehensible only to those – a small minority of teachers – who read the professional journals.

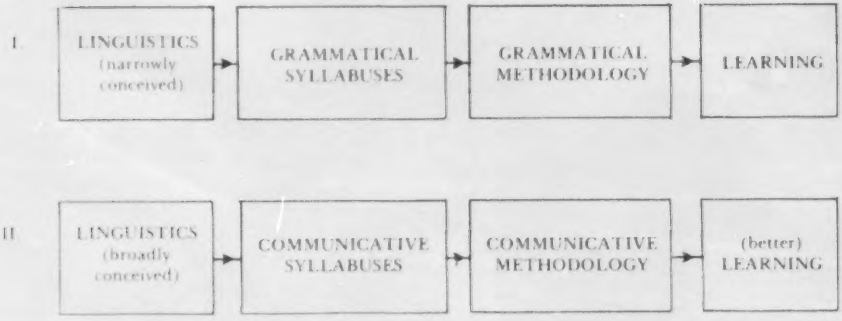
Traditional syllabuses, then, have often been specified in terms of grammar (and usually lists of words and phonological patterns as well). They have not, until recently, been specified in terms of the acts to be performed in English, and I have still to see a syllabus which really seriously attempts to specify semantic units. The reason for this limitation has had partly to do with the state of linguistic theory, and partly to do with the recognized function of a syllabus. Certainly linguists were far more concerned with the specification of a generalized linguistic knowledge than with rules of use, but this is not to say that teachers were not concerned with teaching the use of the language. The argument was about how best to do this rather than whether to do it. The tacit assumption (and one which still underlies most foreign language teaching) was that first we should teach the code, and that classroom activity would give enough experience of using the code to enable learners to operate on their own when necessary. This was 'skill-using' following 'skill-getting' in Wilga Rivers' terms (Rivers, 1972:22). The job of the syllabus was to specify what the underlying knowledge of the code to be acquired was before it could be put into use. Syllabus specifications were aimed at teachers' 'presentation' techniques, and provided the content for presentation. During the later 'practice' and 'production' stages the techniques used would assist learners in developing capacities to use the language, but this was a matter for methodology, not for syllabus specification. Thus methodological discussion for many years insisted on the need to 'situationalize' language, to practice it 'in context', and to 'make it meaningful' to the students. Only in recent years has it been claimed that syllabuses should specify the nature of situations, contexts and meaning, and this claim has been a direct result of theoretical speculation, and empirical investigation about the ways in which we behave, in relation to each other, with language.

But there is a problem here. A syllabus is not a device for the description of language; it is a device to assist effective teaching. Indeed, many of the difficulties which have arisen in argument are the result of confusion over what exactly a syllabus is, or what it is meant to do. I have attempted elsewhere to define a syllabus as an administrative tool which involves generalizing about the nature of learning and specifies a progression from a position where the learner is presumed to be to a stated set of appropriate goals (Brumfit, 1981). If this view, which does not need to be spelled out in detail here, is accepted, then the structure of a syllabus must be at least partly dependent on a learning theory. This raises problems, particularly if communicative syllabuses are viewed as necessarily notional or functional, for it is difficult to see how such ill-defined categories can be fitted into a view of how language is learned. Until we are able to clarify what the exact status of either a notion or a

function is, beyond simply saying that one is an element of meaning and the other a categorization of what we do with language, we cannot see whether they are items in a system. If they are not items in a system, then we may reasonably assume that when we learn whatever it is they represent we are associating that with some other completely different system, perhaps even a grammatical one. For we do know that there is a relatively coherent, economically describable, grammatical system. We have no such knowledge about functions, notions, problem-solving operations, discourse strategies, or any of the other possibilities.

This is to argue that the kind of economical specification of language which teachers (not learners, please note) need cannot as yet be achieved in terms of the communicative categories which are frequently passed around in conferences and seminars. The value of such discussion must remain speculative rather than concrete for most teachers, its main function to provide the guidelines for careful and extremely limited experimentation until such experimentation, and further discussion, enables us to produce something more workable.

Why, then, should a proposal whose 'generalizability remains to be shown... lacking in linguistic detail and therefore no more than suggestive (Wilkins, 1974:91) have achieved such rapid popularity? One reason, of course, was that it was an intellectually exciting proposal which was intuitively attractive. Another was that the language teaching profession is always looking for panaceas to hide from itself, cynics would say, the unpalatable truth that language learning is always nasty, brutish, and long. But underlying any enthusiastic response was, I suggest, a misunderstanding of the nature of teaching, and an assumption that in some way teaching must be subservient to external disciplines, that it has no knowledge of its own. Let me try to clarify this claim by means of a simple diagram.



Sequence I represents a reasonable view of the relationship between descriptive linguistics and language teaching in the past. Sequence II represents the view that many people have had of the analogous relationships in more

recent times. But to accept such a view is to misunderstand the role of methodology. The function of teaching has always been to take the linguistic core, ensure that it is presented as appropriately as possible, and to establish the conditions for its effective use by learners. Of course over the years there have been changes in the needs that learners have had, the relative importance of reading, or of literature, or of casual conversation has varied, and there have been changes in our understanding of the nature of learning, but teaching methods have always been concerned with enabling learners to use the target language effectively. After all, even learning to read and translate is learning to operate communicatively. It may be true that linguistics has swung back closer to the interests of, say, Sapir or Firth than was customary fifteen years ago, but that is no reason to insist on the narrowness of language teaching methodology. Indeed, in many respects traditional language syllabuses, with their insistence on integrative activities like reading and translation, and their concern with literary content, were more truly communicative than some contemporary ones. The point is that descriptive linguistics has indeed something to offer to syllabus specification, but the syllabus cannot specify the nature of teaching itself. It may be able to offer helpful guidelines, but in the last resort only the teacher, by interacting with the class, can create the activities and environment to enable linguistic specifications to be converted to language use. Language use is performed by people, and emerges from relationships between people. And to describe language use is neither to learn it nor to teach it.

What linguistics, broadly conceived, is doing is to describe and attempt to analyze many things that teachers, through their methodology, and of course all language users through their interaction with each other, have always been doing. If there is to be a development in methodology, it should develop as much out of earlier methodology as out of new syllabus ideas. Knowing how to teach is not the same thing as describing languages, but it is a great deal more important for language teachers, and it is a kind of knowledge, like knowing how to act, or to swim, or to be a good friend, that is learned by being felt and experienced as much as by being described.

2. Communicative methodology

If teachers have always been concerned with communication, it may be asked, why should there be any change in methodology? One answer is to say that methodology is a product of relationships between teacher and taught, and that if new populations of students emerge, with different expectations and slightly different needs, new methodological principles will necessarily develop. It is more helpful, however, to point out that the reaction to proposals for new communicative syllabuses indicates a great deal of dissatisfaction with existing teaching, and – if methodology is as important as I have claimed – it must be included in the indictment. However, it is important that we ask the right questions. Teaching is not like a science. Science is concerned with solving problems which develop out of earlier problems. Because of this it is possible to talk about the development of science in terms of intellectual

advances. But to ask whether languages are better or worse taught now than they used to be is like asking whether marriages are better or worse than they were. There are so many external influences on attitudes, so many close personal factors, and there is so little clear understanding of what is involved, that general comments are impossible to evaluate. We can try to improve, but we would be unwise, on the basis of past experience, to expect to discover any all-purpose formula. Yet we can benefit from sources very little tapped, the experience of teachers themselves, of students themselves, in normal classrooms, operating competently without the benefit of the amazing breakthrough, the latest 'method' or the master teacher. This is where most successful, as well as most unsuccessful teaching takes place, and it is within such ordinary surroundings that any substantial improvement will have to occur.

Teachers can control the methods they use; they can control little else. Yet changes made to materials or syllabuses will be ineffective if teachers fail to understand them or feel unconvinced of the need for change. Furthermore, teachers do know and understand methodology. That is what they are planning when they think ahead about their work; that is what they are improvising with as they adapt their preparation to their classes. Any serious improvement to teaching must be based on teachers. So any categories for discussion that we use must be sufficiently simple to be interpreted by teachers of all kinds, native and nonnative speakers, trained and untrained, lazy and committed, those who would not be seen dead at a TESOL conference as well as those who are already planning for the next.

Yet how are we to find categories which will genuinely influence teaching procedures in desirable directions, and be compatible with the changes which all of us accept as intellectually convincing? One way is to look for categories which reflect changes in our attitude to language acquisition procedures. Recent emphasis, from a wide range of sources, on the integration of language use and language acquisition (Halliday, 1975), on acquisition rather than overt learning (Krashen, 1976), on the role of error and simplification (Corder, 1978), and on the involvement of student personality (Stevick, 1976; Moskowitz, 1978) tends to demand some sharp distinction between the traditional emphasis on skill-getting and a modern emphasis on skill-using. Only the term 'skill' is unfortunate and is best avoided. But one basic point which needs to be emphasized in any discussion of teaching is the role of 'natural' language activity, whether conversation, writing or reading.

A convenient pair of terms to express this distinction without introducing unnecessary technicality is *accuracy* and *fluency*. In many ways of course it does not matter exactly which terms are chosen as long as the distinction is made clear, but it helps to use terms which are available in normal usage, as long as we are not insisting on complexities of exact definitions. These terms are memorable enough and meaningful enough for our purposes.

The convenience of such a binary distinction is that it is simple, and corresponds to basic planning elements in any teacher's activity. Some work, we can say, must be aimed at accuracy, and some at fluency. And we can further point out that syllabuses specify what has to be introduced to the students, by means of accuracy work, but that far more time is necessary for students to

spend on fluency work, in the course of which they will internalize items to which they have only previously been exposed. To put it in more sophisticated terms, accuracy work requires operation of the monitor; fluency work presumably assists acquisition, in Krashen's model. Learning how to mean, in Halliday's model, will emerge primarily through fluency work, but accuracy work will enable the tokens with which meaning is negotiated to be made available to the nonnative speaker.

Fluency work, then, occurs whenever the student, with whatever inadequate dialect has so far been internalized, behaves like a native speaker, and consequently is using language without fear of correction, but with a concern for the message or the purpose of language use. But fluency work will still be dependent on the provision of some amount of accuracy work. There will be many occasions when students will want to be corrected, and when they should expect presentation by the teacher of new items, and here accuracy is the issue, but this must not be confused with the learning process itself. That can only occur when students themselves operate the language, for their own purposes—though often guided by the teacher—and, more importantly, in their own way.

My experience of discussing this distinction with teachers on many occasions is that they find it intuitively helpful, and not so radical as to alienate the conservative, nor so reactionary as to alienate the radical.

But having made the distinction, the crucial issue remains of what is to be done with it. It does enable us immediately to ask teachers to assess what proportion of class time has recently been spent on fluency work, and to suggest, if necessary and it usually is, that a much greater proportion of fluency activity is desirable. The problem is that syllabuses and course books usually measure teaching, not learning, by specifying what the teacher must do and not indicating the gaps or holes in the syllabus during which student activity, and consequently student learning, is greatest. If we offer a rule of thumb (a minimum of one third of the time at the very beginning, rising to upwards of ninety percent on fluency work) we can at least orientate teachers towards procedures which reduce the learning load and increase acquisition chances. Furthermore, procedures for the development of fluency activities do not require massive new doses of materials into exhausted educational systems. All textbooks can be worked on in groups, for any kind of exercise, and discussion can be moved towards English, even if a pidgin English, from an early stage. There are, of course, many books of communication games which can be drawn upon for assistance (e.g. Maley and Duff, 1978), but teachers do not have to depend on these. Certainly, teacher training courses need to sensitize trainees to this distinction, and to spend a great deal of time on helping them to use existing materials for fluency activity.

Simple but useful categories such as these will enable teachers to concentrate primarily on what they do in class rather than on the syllabus specifications. In this way the emphasis in teaching will be on the process of teaching, and innovation will be centered on the people, teachers, and the place, the classroom, where it can expect to be genuinely effective. To give the

responsibility for innovation to other experts, however competent and committed they may be, is to remove it from the one group of people who can adapt change sensitively to the precise needs of the learners whom they serve and the society in which they work.

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ED223087

Advanced Composition: Beginning at the Top

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One of the most difficult challenges facing an ESL student at the college level is being able to write an adequate composition. His previous instruction in writing has emphasized grammar, sentence structure, and controlled composition exercises; it has simply provided written practice in grammar (Taylor, 1976:309). Although correct grammar and sentence structure are important to the composing process, they account for only a part of the evaluative criteria of a composition. Recent research by Sarah Warshauer Freedman has shown that teachers' evaluations of compositions were influenced by "specific definable parts." She discovered that "they (teachers) valued content first and then organization;" and she suggested that "those criteria of good writing that seem sound can be incorporated into pedagogy . . . ." (Freedman, 1979:160-64). A study done for the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to determine the relevance of skills tested by the Test of Standard Written English (TSWE) further indicates the importance of organization and development in college-level compositions. The results of the study show that the priority items in composition, as determined by college professors, are (1) writing a unified essay, (2) using supportive detail, (3) arranging arguments logically, (4) making verbs agree with subjects, and (5) writing expository prose (Farrell, 1981:47). However, most ESL composition texts are still concentrating their pedagogical efforts at the sentence level, for example, Lois Robinson's *Guided Writing and Free Writing* and Mary S. Lawrence's *Reading, Thinking, Writing*. Those which purport to deal more specifically with controlled or free composition emphasize the paragraph, such as Mary S. Lawrence's *Writing as a Thinking Process* and Barbara Seale's *Writing Efficiently*. Even here, though, the real emphasis is often on the sentence with the assumption that the student can somehow go from sentence to paragraph and by extension from paragraph to full composition. For example, Mary Lawrence, in the introduction to her book *Writing as a Thinking Process*, outlines the writing practice as moving from writing sentences and questions to compositions.

This assumption that teaching composition involves first teaching the paragraph is probably the result of ESL teachers looking to the teachers of native English speakers for direction. A review of composition textbooks for freshman English classes indicates that most of them reflect practice in the so-called "method of paragraph development." Students are instructed to write paragraphs following certain modes of development, i.e., chronological order, cause and effect, comparison/contrast, etc. And according to Meade and Ellis, "Teachers have generally interpreted the presentation of paragraph development by these methods to mean that students should practice them, often in complete isolation from any broader context" (Meade and Ellis, 1976:193).

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Although there has been reported success in teaching students to group sentences in ways which produce acceptable paragraphs (i.e., William Strung, *Sentence Combining;* Donald Dacher, et al., *The Writer's Option),* we very much question the implicit assumption that the way to teach the full composition to ESL students is by having students write certain types of paragraphs and then having them group paragraphs to form full compositions.

First of all, although native English speakers may be able to group sentences to form acceptable paragraphs using a given mode of development, ESL students will encounter difficulty in this task because of the differences, in accepted rhetorical patterns among different languages. As Kaplan points out (Kaplan, 1968:1-20), "Logic (in the popular, rather than the logician's sense of the word) which is the basis of rhetoric is evolved out of a culture; it is not universal. Rhetoric, thus, is not universal either, but varies from culture to culture and even from time to time within a given culture. Similarly, William Irmscher says (Irmscher, 1979:45-56): "As human beings, we are not born with an innate sense of shape and structure. We don't begin with an inborn abstraction of form and order." We must learn it.

> In Western culture, our concept of order is closely tied to qualities of linearity and symmetricality. In terms of writing, what most of us recognize as logical is a one-directional sequence of thought with parts connected link by link to form continued successive discourse.

Thus, the rhetorical components used in English for expressing, for example, cause and effect are not the same as those the ESL student learned in his native language. Hence, the ESL student must be made aware of the rhetorical components of English.

Secondly, the choice of a given mode of paragraph development results from, rather than precedes, the overall organization of the composition. "A paragraph may demand a certain method because it fits the broader context directed in turn by the writer's overall purpose." (Meade and Ellis, 1976:193). Thus, to teach students to write various paragraph modes without also helping them be able to decide when to choose which mode is not really teaching composition. If paragraphs depend on the overall organization, then we would submit that the place to begin is with the overall organization.

What we are proposing is a method of teaching composition to advanced ESL students which reorders the accepted sequencing of materials. Rather than proceeding from sentence to paragraph to composition, as most English and ESL texts now do, we would begin to teach overall organization and modes of development in conjunction while at the same time exploring how different sentence types relate to different paragraph modes. In other words, we want to focus the instruction "from the top."

In an earlier paper (Constantinides and Fry, 1976), debate was presented as a model in which the prime concern was the act of speaking. It was shown that debate provides a "framework within which the student must speak" but which does not allow him to write and then read or memorize a speech. "Con-

sequently, [he is] forced to speak more or less spontaneously." The purpose was to provide opportunities for what Wilga Rivers calls "autonomous interaction" (Rivers, 1972). Constantinides and Fry also mentioned that "the methods of organization and argumentation learned in the debate model are used in writing activities. . . ." however, that idea was not fully explored. This observation, though, is supported in an essay by Kinneavy and Kilne (1979) in which they state that "there have been direct applications of work in these disciplines (philosophy, speech, and education) to matters of composition." These two rhetoricians have further asserted in the same article that "many of the same techniques of speech and propaganda analysis, whether made in speech departments or in allied departments, are very applicable to the written medium." We have determined that the relationship between debate, a speech discipline, and composition is significant. The highly formalized patterned structure of the speech process in debate offers an analogous mechanism to the writing process in composition.

We became "aware" of this analogous mechanism when we were working with our students in the composition part of our program. At that time debate was taught in a one-semester course during which the students prepared and presented debates; in the process of preparing for the debates, they worked on study skills such as reading textbooks, taking reading notes, taking objective tests, doing library research, and taking lecture notes. The majority of the time, however, was spent on collecting and organizing materials for debates on topics the students had chosen (with supervision). Debates were presented at the end of the course. (For more information on the technique of preparing debates, see Constantinides and Fry, 1972).

Composition was taught in the following semester as an essentially separate activity. We approached the essay by first presenting paragraphs and paragraph unity and coherence, the topic sentence, adequate development, etc. We experienced difficulty in making such concepts clear to our students. Most of them could write correct sentences in English, but they could not make that "magic leap" to well-developed paragraphs and then to the well-organized essay, no matter how many model paragraphs or essays we discussed in class. One day while we were discussing the need for more support in a paragraph, we compared the use of detail in writing to the use of evidence in a debate. At last students understood what we meant by support.

Encouraged by our "success," we decided to explore the teaching of other rhetorical principles by analogy to debate. And we found that it could work at all "levels" – thesis statement, topic sentences, paragraph development, proper rhetorical stance, etc. We began by analyzing the organizational elements in the two discourse modes.

Most composition textbooks discuss organizational elements in terms of the outline. The major elements usually presented in these outlines are:

1. Topic
2. Thesis (Statement).
3. Topic Sentence.
4. Development.

1. The *topic* is the subject of the paper.
2. The *thesis* (statement) is the main idea stated in one specific sentence.
3. The *topic sentences* are the main controlling ideas of a paragraph.
4. The *development* is the explanation of and support for the idea contained in a particular topic sentence.

A typical outline form is shown below:

TOPIC:
THESIS STATEMENT:

I. TOPIC SENTENCE

A. DEVELOPMENT
B. DEVELOPMENT
C. DEVELOPMENT

II. TOPIC SENTENCE

A. DEVELOPMENT
B. DEVELOPMENT
C. DEVELOPMENT

III. TOPIC SENTENCE

A. DEVELOPMENT
B. DEVELOPMENT
C. DEVELOPMENT

Debate textbooks discuss organization in terms of five functional elements. These are:

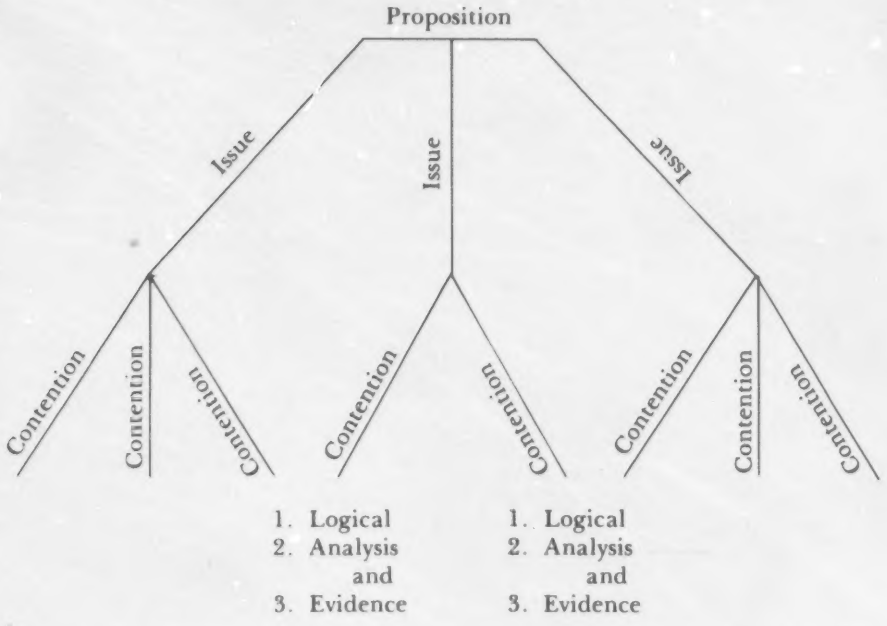
1. Proposition.
2. Issues.
3. Contentions.
4. Logical Analysis.
5. Evidence.

1. The *proposition* is a single affirmative statement which is controversial. Since a proposition is controversial, it can have at least two possible points of view that can be systematically defended.
2. The *issues* are usually conclusions about the proposition that must be proven. There are three "stock" issues (conclusions) in most propositions of policy, usually constructed in the form of questions: Is there a need to adopt the proposition; is there a plan to bring about the proposition; are there benefits from adopting the proposition? The answers to these question issues depend on which of the two points of view a debater accepts about the proposition – agreeing or disagreeing with it.
3. The *contentions* are the reasons for accepting a particular issue. They are supported and explained by the use of logical analysis and evidence.
4. The *logical analysis* delineates the steps in the reasoning process which leads

to the conclusion stated in a particular contention.

5. The *evidence* is another form of support for a particular contention. It can include quotations, statistics, examples, illustrations, etc.

The relationship of these elements is shown in the following diagram:



[adapted from Murphy, James J., and Jon M. Ericson, *The Debater's Guide*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1961, p. 33]

It is apparent from the above diagram that once the proposition is established each of the other elements derives from the previous one. Thus, there is a clear hierarchy of elements in the debate process from proposition to logical analysis and evidence. That same hierarchy can obtain in the outline; that is, the thesis statement derives from the topic and in turn "produces" the topic sentences. But the outline form itself does not make the idea of hierarchy clear. Also, many traditional composition courses and texts begin at the "bottom" of the hierarchy, the methods of paragraph development, further obscuring the fact that each element grows out of the preceding one. It becomes a gigantic leap to go from a paragraph to the idea of a thesis.

What is needed in composition is a model which presents the hierarchy from the top, which follows the composing process. Teaching composition by analogy to debate does that.

The composition course

During the semester, students write eight compositions (300-500 words each), plus a final composition. In order to reinforce the idea of the hierarchical relationship of the elements, each composition assignment calls for a complete essay. The assignments are carefully sequenced with one particular element emphasized in each assignment. The composition is evaluated primarily on the element emphasized – although the student receives comments on all parts of the composition including sentence structure, grammar, spelling, etc. If a student has problems at the sentence or sub-sentence level, he is advised to work on these matters in the I.L.C. (Individualized Learning Center) which is an individualized diagnostic/prescriptive program supplementary to the composition course.

Assignment one begins with a review of the formulation of a debate proposition, the "top" item in the hierarchy. The same limiting and focusing process used in formulating a proposition is used to select and limit a topic for a composition. Because of the nature of the proposition, it provides not only a general topic, but also a position *vis-a-vis* that topic, i.e. "Resolved: that capital punishment should be abolished." (This proposition and all other propositions used as examples in this section are ones which have actually been debated in our classes. Thus, when we talk about deriving issues from a proposition, for example, we use the actual issues presented in the debates in previous semesters.) In the debate, the affirmative team supports that statement and the negative team opposes it. The writer may choose which position he wishes to take. Having chosen a position, he then can rewrite the proposition into an appropriate topic for his composition, for example "Capital punishment should not be abolished." The first assignment is evaluated on having everything in the composition relate to the focused topic, on its unity.

Assignment two focuses on the next step as "Resolved: that nuclear-powered generating stations should be abolished." We review how that proposition raises certain questions, such as "Why should they be abolished?", "How can they be abolished?", "What will happen if they are abolished?" We then point out that the scope of a 500-word composition will not allow for the thorough discussion of the answers to all three of the questions (issues). So the student must make a choice and decide which question he will answer. He can then rewrite the issue into a thesis statement which reflects his position on the topic, for example, "Nuclear-powered generating stations are dangerous," or "If nuclear-powered generating stations are abolished there will not be enough power available to meet the needs of the country." We discuss how the thesis statement both limits the topic and implies certain procedures or divisions for the composition. For example, the thesis statement "Nuclear-powered generating stations are dangerous" implies that the composition will present reasons why they are dangerous. This second assignment is graded on both adequate thesis statement *and* unity.

In the third assignment we expand on the idea that the composition must do what the thesis statement implies it will do. This involves reviewing how contentions are derived from issues. Once again we begin with a debate proposi-

tion, for example, "Resolved: that the government of South Africa should be changed." We go through the process of forming issues, for example, "Are there reasons for changing the government in South Africa?" In a debate, that issue would be stated "The government of South Africa should be changed because . . . ." The "becauses" are the contentions. By analogy, we then construct the thesis statement "The government of South Africa needs to be changed." The next step is to formulate sentences which explain why, for example, "It is corrupt" or "It does not represent a majority of the population." These are the topic sentences. The third assignment is evaluated on having a focused topic, a clearly stated thesis statement, and topic sentences which fulfill the expectations inherent in the thesis statement.

Assignments 4-8 deal with using logical analysis or evidence to support contentions and, by analogy, to support topic sentences. Here we have to discuss the choices of what is called, in composition terms, modes of development. This is crucial to good writing and often presents problems for students. The debate composition model helps solve these problems. The hierarchy which has been shown above presents an approach to a composition in which each step limits the choices for the next step. By the time the student reaches the point of having to make choices among modes of development, certain choices have been ruled out. Using the thesis statement "The government of South Africa needs to be changed" and the topic sentence "It is corrupt," it is clear that the mode of development called for is development by examples.

Furthermore, in learning to make effective choices we find that the experience our students had in debate is especially beneficial. In the debate they tried out different kinds of logical analysis and evidence to support their contentions. From the immediate feedback they received from the opposing team, they could determine whether or not the analysis of evidence was effective and convincing. If it didn't work, in the next speech they tried something else. Also they were analyzing and evaluating the analysis and evidence of the opposing team for its effectiveness. This trial and error procedure gives them some basis for making choices among the different modes of development. Each of the assignments 4 through 8 is evaluated on focused topic, clear thesis statements, relevant topic sentences, and appropriate and adequate development.

After working with several different kinds of compositions (cause and effect, persuasion, comparison/contrast, etc.) and seeing how different thesis statements "generate" different propositions, our students are asked to write a final composition in which they can choose from a variety of topics and must generate an appropriate organizational pattern with appropriate development. This is the final examination and the final "test" of the debate composition model as a teaching/learning model.

Preliminary study

In order to determine if the debate/composition model is effective as a means of teaching composition for advanced ESL students, the following procedure was employed.

1. Method.

1.1 Subjects. Twenty-four students who were enrolled for two consecutive semesters during the 1979-80 academic year in a composition course for which equivalent credit for Freshman English is given participated in the study. These 24 were chosen because it was possible to obtain for each of them both the diagnostic essay written at the beginning of the first semester and the final paper written at the end of the second semester. The students had a variety of educational backgrounds, academic majors, and native languages. All had a TOEFL score of 500 or better (an admission requirement for the University).

1.2 Procedures. Each paper was reproduced in typewritten form exactly as written, including paragraph indentations or lack of them. Because the papers were written on different topics at the beginning and the end of the two-semester sequence, the topic was also reproduced for each paper. The papers were randomly numbered so that pre-test and post-test papers could not be identified. A holistic grading was conducted of all papers on the same day. The readers were six instructors of Freshman English, not ESL instructors. The instrument used for the grading was the *Composition Ability Profile* (Jacobs, et al.; 1979).

2. Results and Discussion. Table 1 gives the results for the pre-test and post-test scores achieved on each section of the *Profile* and for the total scores.

TABLE 1

Scores for pre- and post-test compositions

	Range	Mean	Median	T-score
A. Sub-section results				
Organization				
Pre-test	13-20	16.375	16.5	
Post-test	14-20	18.16	18	3.40; $p > .01$
Content				
Pre-test	20-30	24.75	24.5	
Post-test	23-30	26.75	27	3.54; $p > .01$
Vocabulary				
Pre-test	13-19	16.33	16	
Post-test	13-20	17.42	18	3.75; $p > .01$
Language use				
Pre-test	14-23	18.83	18.5	
Post-test	16-24	20.75	21	4.16; $p > .001$
Mechanics				
Pre-test	3-5	3.83	4	
Post-test	3-5	4.04	4	2.296; $p > .01$
B. Total score				
Pre-test	67-95	79.25	77	
Post-test	69-98	85.7	87	5.3; $p > .001$

As shown, there was significant change in all the part scores as well as in the total scores. While it is possible that some improvement in the areas of vocabulary, language use, and even possibly mechanics could be attributed to the students' exposure to English during the 9-month period involved from pre-test to post-test, it seems unlikely that that exposure would account for the improvement in the areas of organization and content. Thus the implication is that the debate/composition model is effective as a means of teaching organization and development to advanced level ESL students.

The results of this preliminary study are encouraging, but a more rigorously designed study needs to be conducted. Additionally, the debate/composition model is being modified for use with native speakers of English.

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ED223088

A Focus on Pre Writing Strategies

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Because we are involved in teaching writing to non-native speakers, we clearly face some problems that composition teachers of native speakers do not. Obviously, interference from the native language will produce problems on both a structural and rhetorical level. Nevertheless, I share with Zamel (1976:68) the conviction that by acting as if teaching composition to ESL students is totally unrelated to the teaching of composition in regular English classes, we have deprived ourselves of much valuable information: "What we have failed to realize is that by the time our students are ready to write compositions, that is, create and express their own thoughts and ideas in the second language, they need the same kind of instruction that students in English Classrooms need." Clearly, we share with all composition teachers a need to arrive at some understanding of what composition is and, if and when we accomplish this task, we need to be able to help students master the process.

According to Richard Young (1978:31) composition teaching to native speakers has been operating within a framework which has the following features:

- An emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process;
- An analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs;
- A classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument;
- A strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation); and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis); and
- A preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper.

The teaching of ESL composition has emphasized similar aspects. We have, it seems to me, focused primarily on the product—a mechanically and stylistically "correct" document. As such, a great deal of time in composition classes is devoted to usage exercises. This is done even though the research strongly suggests that while sentence-manipulation exercises may promote facility in sentence combining, it has no effect on the rhetorical aspects of writing (Mellon, 1969).

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Presently, as evident in the literature, we are witnessing a shift from an emphasis on composition as a product to composition as a process. While this broadens the scope of the legitimate concerns of composition class, we are still left with the central question: what is the composing process? Posing the question in this manner, however, implies that there is one universal process. A more appropriate question might be: what processes are involved in composing an essay which serves a particular function?

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James Britton (1978:23) has proposed that writing involves three stages: preparation, incubation, and articulation. Often composition assignments begin at the point of articulation (e.g. write a short paper in which you contrast dating patterns in your country with the United States). Starting at the final stage like this poses many problems for students, the overriding one being, what to say about the topic. Sondra Perl (1980:365) points out that any topic initially evokes in the writer a "felt sense;" it calls forth images, words, ideas, and feelings. The composing process, according to Perl, begins with *paying attention*, with taking the topic in and seeing what it evokes in us. Thus, any student when given a topic will have a variety of personal associations evoked by the topic. The composing process, it seems to me, needs to begin with an exploration of these associations. But it cannot stop here; eventually, these associations and reactions must be ordered.

Traditionally, the initial exploration of a topic has been linked with invention. According to Beaugrande (1979:261) invention is "situated within the broad range between ungoverned associating (e.g. daydreaming), and mechanical reproduction of conventional knowledge (e.g. dictionary entries). The writer produces a text by arranging elements in a combination which is held together partly by conventional associations and partly by newly created associations." In other words, when a student is given a topic, the topic evokes many personal associations along with a number of conventional associations (though for our students, cultural differences may minimize or alter some of these conventional associations). The composition itself must present a balance between these two poles. If the text presents only the ungoverned associations, it may be totally incomprehensible to the reader; if, on the other hand, it is too conventionalized, the reader will be disappointed that the writer has nothing new to say. A writer then must not only explore his unique reactions to a topic but also express them within the bounds of acceptable form. These two concerns should be primary in any pre-writing activity; however, the actual pre-writing strategy that is selected depends to a great extent on the purpose of the discourse.

The type of discourse that is most commonly emphasized in composition courses is what Britton terms transactional writing or writing in which language is used to meet the demands of the participants. As Britton puts it (1968:18), "As participants we use writing 'to get things done' whether in the operative mode or informing, instructing or persuading people, or the intellectual mode of problem solving, speculating or theorizing. An utterance in this category is a means to some end in itself, and its organization will be on the principle of efficiency in carrying out that end."

At the other end of the continuum is what Britton terms poetic discourse or discourse in which the writer assumes the role of a spectator or detached evaluator. In this stance a writer narrates not to get something done but as an end in itself. According to Britton (1968:20), "Like any other work of art, a poetic utterance arises from an inner need, and the need is satisfied in the saying. The evaluative function is fulfilled for the writer in the act of presenting an experience of order and for the reader in sharing that experience and its ordering effect."

Since the majority of writing that our students undertake is transactional, I would like to start by examining pre-writing strategies for this type of writing. However, I will return at the end of the paper for a look at the role of poetic language in the ESL composition class. The question then is: how can we promote fluency in transactional writing? If we are going to focus on the composing process rather than the product, we clearly need to start our activities long before we get to the point of asking students to inform or persuade their audience. It may be helpful to consider why we write and how we begin when we use transactional language. Generally, we begin to write because we believe there is a need to inform or persuade someone of something. This need can arise either from our own beliefs or from the fact that someone or something has convinced us that there is a need to write. Let us for a moment take a specific example.

Assume you were asked to give a talk on the problems of foreign students on campus. You know the general topic, but the real problem is how to get a handle on the topic. How do you proceed? Very likely you go through what Britton terms the stage of incubation, a critical but largely unexplored stage of the composing process. You weigh the many things you could discuss and how you might organize these things. You think of your audience and purpose. Eventually you arrive at some overall strategy. While all of this may occur before you ever start to write, some of it may go on as you are writing.

A composition class that deals with the composing process must take into account this development of a topic. Like most writers, our students, before they start to write, need to do several things. First, they need to recognize their reason for writing. It may be that the students feel a real need to inform or persuade someone about something, or it may be that they do so to meet class requirements. The latter, of course, is the most common reason, but hopefully there are instances of the former. In any case, students need to recognize why they are writing.

Secondly, our students need to focus on a topic. Initially the topic may be expressed in quite general terms such as dating patterns, illiteracy, or word processing systems. It is at this point, however, that the writer needs to follow Perl's advice and pay attention to the topic and examine what associations it draws forth. In order to help students do this we might merely ask them to write down what they know about a topic and how they feel about it. These ideas need not be in sentences or in any particular sequence.

Third, our students need to consider their options for organizing a topic. All topics, of course, are amenable to several types of rhetorical patterns. The topic of dating patterns, for example, could be organized in such a way as to merely explain the typical pattern of a particular country, or to classify or compare these patterns. Heuristic or discovery devices are one way to help students explore these options.

One possibility is simply the heuristic device of a journalist, i.e., questions such as the following:

A. Who usually dates in your country?
   Do certain socioeconomic or cultural groups not date? Is it the male or female who initiates the date?
B. At what age do most students begin dating?
C. Where do most young people go on dates?
D. Why do young people date?
   Is there a great deal of peer pressure or parental pressure to date?
E. How do young people view the dating practices?
   Are they pleased or not with them? How do adults view the practices? How do you view them?

Such questions help the students view the topic from various perspectives. Although they are very general questions, they may lead to other more specific questions. If, for example, students answer that some socioeconomic or cultural groups do not date, or have very different dating patterns, these differences might be pursued. Ultimately the purpose of such heuristic devices is to help students explore a topic. Once this is done they can proceed to the final step, that of choosing a voice and rhetorical pattern.

Selecting an appropriate style and rhetorical arrangement rests on two primary considerations; namely, the purpose of the discourse and the intended audience. Often an initial analysis of the audience will aid in clarifying the purpose of the discourse. One heuristic device that can be used for audience analysis is that set forth by Pfister and Petrick (1980:214). Before any writing is done, they ask students to consider questions such as the following:

- What is the audience like? What is their socioeconomic status, their educational and cultural experience, their values?
- What does the audience know about the topic? What is their opinion on the topic? How strong is this opinion?
- What is my relationship with this audience? Do they know me well? Do they share my values? Why is this topic appropriate for this audience?
- What is my purpose in addressing this audience? What role should I assume for this audience?
- What are the best methods for achieving my goals in terms of organization, tone, diction, etc.?

If the audience is always the teacher, the answers to many of these questions will remain the same. We do, however, have at least two options for varying the audience. The first is to have students write for other members of the class. This strategy presents the students with a realistic audience in the sense that writers often have to address groups which represent a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds and values. The second opinion is to posit an appropriate audience for a topic. Students can be asked to describe a suitable audience for the topic they have chosen and to write their paper with this audience in mind. They might even be asked to specify two different, but appropriate audiences, and vary their style based on the needs of the particular audience.

An analysis of the audience naturally leads to the question of form. The selection of the most appropriate form (i.e. rhetorical pattern and style) needs to be based on the writer's purpose in addressing a particular audience. For example, if a student is addressing her fellow students on dating patterns and her goal is merely to demonstrate that there is a wide range of patterns, she might first classify the patterns, then describe each, compare and contrast them, and finally draw some conclusions as to the reasons for and value of the various patterns.

If, however, the student's goal is to convince his audience that dating patterns need to be changed, he might first specify what he considers to be an ideal dating pattern, contrast the existing practices with this ideal, and finally present his reasons for advocating a change.

Once a rhetorical pattern is determined, certain predictions can be made as to some of the syntactic patterns that will be useful. For example, the initial classification of dating patterns will likely necessitate the use of the passive voice and the colon (e.g. "Dating patterns in my country *can be classified into* three major groups: _____, _____, _____). The explanation of each pattern will likely draw on the use of the present tense and conjunctions of time (e.g. "Typically, the *first* stage in the dating process *is* to. . . .). Finally, a comparison of dating patterns will likely make use of comparative adjectives and conjunctions of contrast (e.g. "*Whereas* group A is very serious in their dating behavior, group B is *more casual.*"). Thus, the syntactic patterns and cohesive devices that receive attention in a composition class could be done within a rhetorical framework, a framework which has been specified by the immediate needs of the students. Obviously, transactional writing places greater restrictions on the selection of rhetorical and syntactic patterns than does poetic writing. Indeed, a primary value of transactional writing rests in its ability to expose students to acceptable ways of ordering and expressing a topic.

Transactional writing is, however, not the only kind of writing. At the other end of the continuum is what Britton calls poetic discourse or discourse in which the expression of an idea is an end in itself. This type of writing has typically not received much attention in the ESL classroom. There are, I think, several reasons for this. First, the prevalent view of composition as a product, along with a strong concern for usage and style, is more compatible with transactional writing in which there are some agreed upon standards for evaluating the effectiveness of the rhetorical pattern and the correctness of the syntax. Secondly, ESL composition classes have generally been viewed as a way to teach or at least reinforce grammatical patterns. Transactional writing is, of course, much more in keeping with this goal than is poetic writing.

There are nonetheless valid reasons for providing students with some opportunities for poetic writing. First, poetic writing provides students with more opportunity to explore their personal reactions to a topic. And secondly, since poetic writing conforms less rigidly to conventional rhetorical and syntactic patterns, it may provide a vehicle for promoting fluency. What is important to keep in mind is that poetic writing like transactional writing is a process and a composition class which devotes attention to this type of writing must pro-

vide time for its preparation. Two media that can be used to promote poetic writing are literature and film.

Using literature as a basis for poetic writing offers several advantages. First, the literature itself provides a model for the type of writing the students will be involved in. But even more importantly the reading of the literary work shares many similarities with the creating of one. Just as a distinction can be made between transactional and poetic writing, a similar distinction can be made with reading. Rosenblatt (1978:25) refers to these two types of reading as efferent and aesthetic reading. In efferent reading (as in transactional writing) the goal is to carry something away from the experience whether it be information, a solution to a problem, or an action to be carried out. In aesthetic reading, on the other hand, (as in poetic writing) attention is centered on the very personal experience of the reader with the text. While in efferent reading, the reader strives to minimize personal association, in aesthetic reading these associations are primary.

Poetic writing in the ESL composition class might begin with the reading of a literary text, one which is lexically and syntactically comprehensible to the students so that time need not be given to these dimensions. Thus, rather than following the text with comprehension questions and vocabulary development exercises, it can be followed with questions that help students characterize their experience with the text and express their reactions to it. One pre-writing strategy might be to follow the reading with open-ended statements such as:

— What I enjoyed/disliked most about reading this text was . . . .
— The character I admired the most/the least was . . . .
— While I was reading the text I felt. . . .
— What surprised me the most while I was reading the text was. . . .

Since poetic writing, by definition, arises from a personal need, the assignment that follows would be highly personal in nature. While some students may feel a need to criticize the behavior of one of the characters, others may want to reject one of the values expressed in the work. What is essential in poetic writing is that a student be moved to express some feeling or opinion and further that the expression of this idea is recognized as the goal itself.

A second medium that can be used as a basis for poetic writing is short unnarrated films. Films may even be more productive than literature for this purpose since they don't pose the potential problems of syntactic and lexical difficulty. Also, by involving more of the senses, films provide a concrete context for students to explore their feelings and experiences. As with the use of literature, however, the pre-writing activities should help students clarify their feelings about the films, and the writing assignment itself should be highly personal in nature.

Whether we are dealing with transactional writing or poetic writing we must, I believe, be concerned with the composing process, not just the product. This means that every writing task should be preceded by a number of pre-writing activities. These activities should be designed to accomplish two things. First, they should help students discover what to say; this can be done

by encouraging students, through the use of heuristic devices, to pay attention to the topic, to see what the topic evokes in them. Secondly, pre-writing activities should provide students with practice in the rhetorical and syntactic patterns that the expression of their topic will likely draw on. If in our pre-writing activities we give attention to these two concerns, we will have provided our students both with something to say and with a way to say it.

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EN223089

Concept Relationships: Helping the Beginning Student Read English

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Teachers of ESL often find themselves thrust with little advance warning into new situations, e.g., they may suddenly be faced with students of a different age or proficiency level from that to which they are accustomed. Despite their ability to adapt to "newness," teachers carry certain preset expectations about students and their language skills into the unfamiliar situation and sometimes are surprised by what they encounter. It is often precisely those surprises which lead to new insights about language learning and to new techniques, or new applications of old techniques, to address the needs of students. This paper describes one group of students and the problem they appeared to have in reading, presents techniques which were developed to address the problem, and offers a cognitive explanation of the problem.

1. Background

Last year, on the spur of the moment, several colleagues and I were asked to develop and teach an intensive English course for a group of vocational education administrators from an Arabic-speaking country in the Middle East. The teachers were told that the students were technical teacher-trainers at vocational education centers, aspiring to become technical school directors; that some of the students had studied or worked in England, Denmark, and Japan; that all were literate in their first language; and that they had had three to six years of English training. Even taking into account the likelihood that those "years" translated into perhaps three hours per week of instruction in English, our assumption was that we would be dealing with relatively intelligent, literate adults who were at least advanced beginners in English proficiency level. The curriculum was set up, including a reading laboratory several hours a week in which students could use conventional individualized reading materials such as boxes prepared by Science Research Associates (SRA).

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In the reading lab, students were first given the lowest level of available materials as a means of assessing which level each student should be working at. The students and instructor went over the directions and a sample item, and then the students did the ten-item exercise, which involved reading one to two sentences and choosing one of four word or phrase choices to complete the idea. The instructor's expectation was that the lowest level would be far too easy and that gradually a higher level appropriate to each student would be found. Contrary to expectation, students did poorly on the exercise; many got as few as two out of ten items correct. The twenty percent score recurred on other low-level item sets.

2. Analysis of the problem

The first reaction was that perhaps the sentence structure and vocabulary were too difficult. Several of the low-level items were modified by simplifying the sentence structure and substituting higher-frequency vocabulary for words which it thought the students might not know. The students still had difficulty. The next thought was that perhaps the students' proficiency had been overestimated, yet other instructors in the program claimed that although the students lacked confidence in using English, their proficiency in grammar and their recognition vocabulary were at the "advanced beginner" level, or slightly higher in several cases. If so, then why were they having so much difficulty with beginning-level reading materials in the lab?

To shed light on the problem, some of the students were asked to think through aloud the process of arriving at an answer. One of the items used for the "think aloud" activity, a highly simplified version of an SRA item (1963) with *crib* in the original replaced by *baby's bed*, for example, was as follows:

(1) The boy had a duck. The duck liked to swim, so the boy put it in the

a. baby's bed b. bathtub c. laundry basket d. grocery bag

To learn if any of the vocabulary words were the source of the problem, I began going through individual concepts in the item with a student. He indicated that he knew what a bed, tub, laundry basket, and grocery bag were. The dialogue continued (Q. = instructor's question, A. = student's answer):

Q. What is a duck?	A. Like a chicken
Q. What is "swim"?	A. (Student moved arms in Australian crawl fashion)
Q. Where do you swim?	A. In the ocean
Q. What's in the ocean?	A. Water
Q. What's a bathtub?	A. A place for a bath
Q. What do you put in a bathtub first?	A. Water

Leading the student, I said, "The duck liked to swim, swimming happens in the water, and so the boy put the duck in the _____." I paused, waiting for the student to fill in the answer. The student remained confused, willing to eliminate the grocery bag and laundry basket from the possible answers, but going no further. After an additional series of questions, he finally "recognized" (or perhaps just accepted the instructor's word) that *bathtub* was the only possible answer.

One could perhaps argue that the student had difficulty with that item because of cultural factors. After all, animals as pets are not commonly found in Middle Eastern houses, and the notion of having a duck in the house and putting it in the bathtub so that it could swim (which might happen in the U.S.) is likely to be a strange event for many people to imagine. (It should be

noted that this particular student had spent a summer in England, so was generally more proficient and more acculturated to Western customs than many of his fellow students were.) It did not seem that cultural content, although an important potential processing barrier (Eskey 1971:211), was a satisfactory explanation for the student's difficulty with the item.

Other items and students' problems with them were similarly examined. Even the following modified item, far less culture-sensitive than the "duck" item, caused problems:

(2) Mary wants a book for her birthday, because she likes to

a. write b. sing c. read d. play

Even if one did not know what a birthday was (students did know), it was hard to understand why if they knew the individual concepts *book*, *write*, etc. they did not choose *read* as the answer. Students' explanations of other responses included: "Girls like to sing." That is, the students were giving a personal or culture-shaped reaction and were not making the functional connection between *book* and *read*. Similarly in item (1), students had not related *duck*, *swim*, and the inferred concept of *water* together.

There seemed little point in continuing to use reading materials until the students were able to make associations between basic concepts—concepts which they knew as vocabulary items in isolation but appeared not to know as parts of conceptual networks. A series of concept-relationship activities were developed to help the students develop association skills, essential to reading. (Recall that these students were adult learners with technical skills and at least a high school education; however, it is suggested that the techniques, and the basic language learning problem discussed here, have application to other age groups, first-language groups, and types of students as well.)

3. Techniques

Three types of activities—categorization, analogy, and definition—were developed. The techniques may seem "obvious" to many teachers, especially those who have taught young native speakers in the U.S. However, as this paper demonstrates, many of us may need to suspend judgment of "obviousness" as it applied to nonnative speakers, young or old.

3.1. Categorization. This first technique involved having students classify or group concepts into categories in various ways. One type of exercise consisted of function-based verb-noun associations; the students were given questions or statements with a list of alternatives, more than one of which fit the concept (verb) underlined:

(3) Which of these things can you *read*?

IV letter book car word

After answering, e.g., "You can read a letter," students were asked to express sentences for those words which did not fit the "read" group. A student might, for example, say "You watch TV." Many other high-frequency verbs were used in items, including *eat, mail,* and *wash*. Students were also asked to indicate other words that fit, e.g., "You can also read a newspaper."

A second type of categorization exercise focused on noun groups, "logical" (set/subset) classification of nouns according to inherent characteristics. Students read a set of nouns, removed those which did not fit the set, and then explained how the others fit together. Item (4) is an example:

(4) train car truck bus taxi

Ideally, students chose *train* as not belonging with the others and explained that a car, truck, bus, and taxi were vehicles which have four wheels and travel on roads; a train has many wheels and travels on tracks, or a similar explanation. As students became more adept at that kind of set, the items and categories were made more difficult:

(5) basket pail square bucket box

To "solve" item (5), students had to recognize and explain dimensionality, a complex notion. At a later stage, students were given a category (e.g., tools, U.S. coins, containers, four-legged animals) and asked to name as many things as they could which fit the category. Occasionally these were divided further, for example, students were asked to regroup four-legged animals they had mentioned into subsets.

3.2. Analogy. Categorization exercises provided a means for helping students form functional or logical relationships between concepts. The second word association technique, analogy, provided reinforcement of those relationships in a different format. In analogy exercises, illustrated in items (6) to (8), students were asked to find the word in the pair on the right which best matched the relationship in the pair on the left and then to express the pairs in similar sentences:

(6) cat – animal	orange –	lemon	face	fruit	blue
(7) milk – drink	apple –	cake	eat	red	food
(8) kick – foot	throw –	ball	hand	toe	toy

Practice in many easy pairs like (6) was needed before students were able to handle more difficult analogies. A response (spoken first, then written) to (6) might be: "A cat is an animal. An orange is a fruit," each pair expressed as a subset/set. In (7) there is a functional relationship; the student might write: "Milk is something we drink. An apple is something we eat." Similarly in (8), *kick* and *foot* would be paired functionally, parallel to *throw* and *hand*. In all of the analogy items, as in the categorization exercises, the vocabulary was high-frequency, familiar even to "low level" students. It was not the words in

isolation that were important in these exercises but the concept associations words in relationship to other words.

3.3. Definition. Words were put into a more complex framework in the third technique, definitions. Students not only had to relate a concept to an appropriate category or class, but also had to add further information to refine the concept. The technique had two stages. First, students analyzed various definitions such as (9) to (11) in terms of the formal definition elements of member of a set, the set, and specific details about the member which differentiate it from other members of the set:

(9) A fish is a kind of animal that swims in the ocean.
(10) A guitar is a musical instrument with strings.
(11) A wallet is a square leather holder for money and cards.

The class discussed these definitions and others, deciding if, for example, there were other animals that swim in the ocean, and how to explain *fish* so that no other animal such as whales fit. After considerable practice, students went on to the next stage – creating their own formal definitions of concepts. Some student definitions are shown in (12) and (13):

(12) A hammer is a steel and wood tool which we use to hit nails.
(13) An oasis is a small area in the desert with green trees and water.

Certainly there is room for improvement in those student definitions, but they do show that students were able to categorize a concept and provide relevant detail, i.e., relate the word to other concepts. (Notice, by the way, that definitions also offer a fringe benefit in the learning process: practice in using relative clauses.)

4. Results in reading and other skills

Concept-relationship exercises in categorization, analogy, and definition were gradually made more complex. As students showed increased facility with the activities, the reading lab was reinstated. Results were striking – students who had scored at the 20% level only weeks before now scored 70% or higher and began to progress to somewhat higher level item-sets.

It would be nice if one could claim that the sequence of concept-relationship activities was the reason for the change in reading skill. One cannot make that claim, of course, for the students had other formal instruction and informal exposure to English as well; but it does seem likely that the concept exercises did contribute to the students' higher reading comprehension (at least as measured by multiple-choice completion tasks often found in reading lab materials).

Not only did their reading skill increase but other language skills improved as well. One of the most noticeable differences was in their dictionary-use skills. Without any specific instruction in dictionary use, students became

more proficient at using the dictionary to locate definitions of words they encountered but did not know. They were less inclined to take the first definition they found and began to use context clues and relationships to find the appropriate definition. The point is illustrated by item (14):

(14) While driving on the freeway, the man heard a loud sound in the car's engine. He stopped the car on the righthand

a. policeman b. shoulder c. tree d. radio

When the student found the word *shoulder* in the item and looked it up, the first definition was something like "a joint connecting the arm with the human body." However, the freeway and car in the context led him to the appropriate definition of "land along the edge of a road." The student both identified *freeway* as a type of road and associated *car, freeway,* and *edge of a road* together to arrive at the keyed answer.

Second, although the purpose of the exercises was not specifically vocabulary expansion, students' vocabularies did increase as we built category sets. Sometimes students provided each other with words; on other occasions they tried to explain an action or object they were thinking of to the instructor. For example, one day during a discussion of fruits – oranges, apples, bananas, etc. – a student asked what the "small fruit on a tree" found in his country was called. He was asked to give more information, to describe it and give details such as what kind of plant it grew on, and if possible to compare it to other fruits. It took a lengthy exchange to figure out that the student meant the date, growing on a date palm tree.

Far more important than his learning a new vocabulary word was the fact that to get to it, the student had to express relationships, putting the date into a category with other similar fruits and the date palm into context with other trees. That is, it was the process of getting to the word and putting it into context that was important. One of the most useful contexts, as the student had learned from previous exercises and demonstrated in his search for an explanation of *date*, is the category in which a concept can be placed (whether functional or "logical"), awareness of other members of the category, and features of similarity between them. In cognitive terms, the student is building mental associations or networks which can be used to express thoughts in English and into which new information can be integrated.

5. A cognitive explanation

Cognitive networks underlie all language use in a communicative context. To process what one hears or reads, to speak or write in a language, one must relate bits of information according to categories, rules for category membership, and networks of interrelationships already stored in the human memory (Smith 1978:59). What exercises such as the concept-relationship techniques presented here do is help the beginning learner of English make connections made by native speakers and build cognitive networks of relationships between concepts.

The argument might be made that the cognitive approach as it applies to a second language is obvious; "After all," one might comment, "It's something everyone does in a first language so why wouldn't he or she automatically do the same in a second language?" Is it really "automatic" — or from our perspective as ESL teachers, do we just think so? The experience discussed in this paper suggests that such assumptions may not be supported for some students, and it seems unlikely that the group is unique. It cannot be assumed that in other cultures and education systems, students are trained to create "logical" categories for concepts and to use context clues, as is done in this country beginning in the primary grades (see, e.g., portions of elementary school native-speaker reading materials developed by Barnes and Burgdorf, 1975, 1976; Boning, 1976). Nor can it be assumed that students will automatically approach a new learning situation (e.g., learning a second language) as a network-building process. Recall all the ESL students who have begged for vocabulary lists to memorize!

Rote memorization (used to varying degrees in educational systems in the U.S. as well as elsewhere) focuses on isolated concepts and is a skill which has usefulness in some settings, but not in active reading. Reading requires recognition of various concept relationships and semantic associations, many of which are not stated directly in written text and must be inferred by the reader. The complexity of these relationships is illustrated by re-examining item (1) about the duck in terms of the cognitive processing required to arrive at the keyed answer.

The student would need to know that *boy* refers to an animate human being who can "own or possess or have control over" something else. In addition, he would need to recognize that the second *boy* refers to the same boy mentioned in the first sentence. The student would also need to know that *duck* refers to a living animal (in this case, a bird), that ducks are often found in or near water, and that ducks can swim. He would also need to recognize that *it* refers to the duck, and that the duck in both sentences is the same. Next he would need to know that *swim* is an activity which occurs in water and cannot occur without it. He would need to be aware that one characteristic or property of *bathtub* is that it is something you "can put water into," and that a baby's bed, laundry basket, and grocery bag do not customarily have that characteristic. Finally, the student would need to recognize *so* as a causal connective between the duck's liking to swim and the boy's fulfilling that desire by putting the duck in an environment where it could swim.

Only with a cognitive association network that contains or can accommodate those relationships, especially the interconnectedness of duck — swim — water — bathtub, can that student or any other reader process the sentence and complete it with the keyed answer.

To answer the question raised in the subtitle: "Will an ESL student take to reading in English the way a duck takes to water?" The answer seems to be, "Not necessarily — not unless the student can both culturally and cognitively put the duck into the context of water (even if that water is in a bathtub)." English language teachers have long since recognized that vocabulary lists, words out of context, lead a student next to nowhere in developing proficiency

in a language. Terms like "context-sensitive" and "communicative competence" have become part of many people's approaches to teaching. It may be harder for us to recognize that some of our lower-level students may not bring with them to the English language learning process basic cognitive skills for dealing with information in context, and that we may need to give them "English-language readiness." Categorization, analogy, and definition exercises appear to be useful in helping students view information in English as a set of interrelated concepts, not isolated elements, and for helping them approach reading and other language skills as active cognitive processes.

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Part 3

Second Language Acquisition

ED223090

The 'What' of Second Language Acquisition*

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It is becoming quite commonplace to acknowledge that the acquisition of a language involves more than the acquisition of linguistic structures. It involves learning how to use the language appropriately in a social context as well. From the vantage point that this broadened perspective affords one can't help but marvel at what an intricate, versatile phenomenon language is. And yet, despite the many factors that must be taken into consideration for language to be used appropriately within a context, skilful users are capable of transmitting the most subtle nuances of meaning through it. I have come to appreciate language as I never have before.

When I look back over my years of education, I remember with fondness a few exceptional teachers I have had. I recall that one of the qualities these few had in common was an infectious enthusiasm for their subject matter. I never will be enamored of math, but my 10th grade teacher gave me an appreciation for math that I had never before felt. His was such an accomplishment that for a brief interval I even entertained the ridiculous thought of taking more than the required math courses! My teacher made math come alive for me! What better way of celebrating language than by rekindling our own appreciation of it here and returning to our classrooms recommitted to conveying our enthusiasm to our students. I would like to contribute to this process by asking you to consider what it takes to be able to communicate. Following this, I will share with you some research that is being carried out on aspects of developing communicative competence in a second language. Finally, I will make explicit some implications that this research has for me as a teacher.

Aspects of communication

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What does a person have to know to be communicatively competent? We are told today that to be communicatively competent, one must control not only the forms of a language but also the functions of the forms, and be able to use them appropriately in a context. But what does *appropriate* mean? Let us undertake to answer this question by considering an example. The analysis of the example is my own, but I have drawn liberally upon the work of others[2] for their insights into communicative competence.

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*Plenary Address.

[1]This paper was written and revised with the helpful suggestions of K. Bailey, A. Fantini, A. Hawkinson, Hinofotis, J. Millett, A. Silverman and C. Stanley.

[2]The others include Savignon (1972), Paulston (1974), Wilkins (1976), Widdowson (1978, 1980), Munby (1978), Canale and Swain (1980), Riley (1980), Brumfit and Johnson (1980), Breen and Candlin (1980).

The ringmaster of a circus steps to the center ring under a big tent and begins: "Ladies and gentlemen and children of all ages." What did the ringmaster have to know in order for him to utter these two phrases appropriately? At one level he had to have control of the formal properties of the language. Perhaps we can enumerate them if we follow the linguists' heuristic of contrasting what he did say with a malformed version. He could have said: "Ladies and gentlemen and childrens of all ages." But he didn't. He obviously had to have control of the morphology of the language.

He could have said: "Ladies and gentlemen and children of ages all." But he didn't. He showed that he had a command of the syntax of this formula.

He might have said: "Ladies and gentlemen and children of all ages?" with a rising intonation, but this would have been inappropriate as well because he was not asking a question. Here we see that in order to use this expression correctly he had to have knowledge of the prosodic or suprasegmental features of intonation. He of course would have to make use of other phonological rules as well – in order to correctly produce the segmental sounds of the language. Then, too, if he had said "Ladies *or* gentlemen . . ." he would have erred by choosing the wrong lexical item – the exclusive connector *or* rather than the inclusive connector *and*. If he had begun his speech with: "What a great show we have for you today, ladies and gentlemen and children of all ages," he would have demonstrated an incomplete knowledge of the organizational or discourse rules at the suprasentential level. His line only makes sense if it is the first one in the sequence.

If he had whispered: "Ladies and gentlemen and children of all ages," he would have been violating paralinguistic appropriateness rules, since one expects a ringmaster to bellow, not whisper.

Finally, if he had said: "Ladies and gentlemen and children of all ages," while pointing to himself, he would have shown that he did not know the proper nonverbal gesture to accompany this utterance.

Thus, just to avoid violating any of the linguistic rules of the language, he had to have knowledge of and be able to apply morphological, phonological, lexical, syntactic, discourse, paralinguistic, and nonverbal rules. But he needed to know other things as well. He needed to know how to use these linguistic forms appropriately.

He needed to know that the occasion warranted the use of a particular speech act (Searle 1969) – the function in this case of something we might call an "attention-getter." Furthermore, he needed to choose from among all the "attention-getters" in his repertoire to determine the right one for the circus setting. He might have used another form like "Quiet everyone!" but he would have violated a politeness constraint and have offended everyone present. He would also have selected the wrong form if he had used instead: "Gals and guys and kids of all ages." These colloquial terms of address would have been in an inappropriate register or style of formality given the situation.

Of course, he also had to plan the propositional content of his message. He needed to know how to encode meaning. He obviously understood that in order to have his message apply to the entire audience he would have to use terms that included both sexes and all ages. He also deliberately extended the

meaning of "children" to invite the adults to be young-at-heart and to enjoy the circus like their offspring. His utterance also revealed that he knew the appropriate content of an attention-getter for this occasion. He didn't say, "Class, come to order!" an attention-getter for another setting.

This ringmaster was a polished performer. He delivered his lines fluently and perfectly. But suppose on one evening when he began the show he slipped and said: "Ladies and gents . . . I mean gentlemen . . ." We would say that we had witnessed his "strategic competence" – an ability to use verbal and nonverbal strategies to compensate for breakdowns in his message in order to restore the flow of communication.

Even though, as we have seen, the ringmaster had to attend to many details, his task was a limited one because he had only to concern himself with what he was going to say – he was delivering a monologue. There was no need for him to attend to a partner in a conversation. If some woman in the audience had responded to his attention-getter by yelling out: "It's sexist to call us 'ladies'! Please call us 'women,' " we would have thought her response inappropriate. She had taken a turn to speak when the speech event was not a conversation and she had no right to a turn. On the other hand, if she and an acquaintance were at a restaurant and the acquaintance had asked her where the ladies' room was, it would have been proper for her to take a turn and make her point about her objection to the use of "ladies" – that is, providing she abided by the paralinguistic rules and didn't yell out her feelings as she did at the ringmaster. In the latter example she would have been taking a turn where the "interactional" rules permitted, indeed demanded, that she speak.

In some ways, perhaps the choice of my example was ill-advised because this utterance is a conventionalized form (Yorio 1980). As such, the ringmaster had probably memorized his line and did not have to actively apply all the rules we have listed. Yet, every time we create an original sentence in a conversation, we do have to draw upon our knowledge of all the rules we have just identified. In order to fashion our utterance and use it appropriately within a context we must minimally make use of our knowledge of linguistic rules, functions or speech acts, propositional content, interactional patterns, and strategic competence.

Research summary

I would like to turn now to the studies being conducted in these five areas by second language acquisition researchers. The *What* of Second Language Acquisition, the title of my address, has traditionally been used to refer to the learner's linguistic product or speech output which researchers study.

Of course, in order to account for *what* the learner is producing in the second language, we need to examine other *whats* as well: *What* is the nature of the input to which the learner is exposed (in our case, the English language). *What* is the nature of the learner's native language, knowledge of which will influence his or her speech in English? If the learner already is proficient in a second or third language before his or her English acquisition begins, we need to know about these languages as well. Since descriptions of

languages have typically embraced only the linguistic aspects of communicative competence, it has become incumbent upon second language researchers to do some basic research — contrastive analyses between English speech acts and speech acts of other languages, for example — before even beginning to consider *what* the learner is producing. I felt it necessary to clarify this because some of the studies I will treat don't attempt to account for the acquisition process at all. They are designed for basic research — to describe the interactional patterns in English or speech acts in Spanish so that researchers will eventually have the essential *baseline* data with which to explain why the ESL learner is speaking the way he or she is.

It was my original intention to identify and deal with all the studies being done on the three *whats* (the language the learner produces, the learner's native language, and the target language) as reported in the literature on second language acquisition. As I began to compile the studies, however, I realized how lengthy my address would have to be if it were to be comprehensive. I have decided instead, therefore, to report on trends in the research, discussing several studies by way of illustration and citing others when I can. I am not proposing a model of communicative competence in what follows; I offer it instead as a framework that I have found useful in organizing and dealing with the research on acquiring communicative competence in a second language.

Linguistic Aspect

I submitted earlier that communicative competence, linguistically speaking, demanded control of rules at all levels from morphological, phonological, lexical, and syntactic rules to discourse rules governing the cohesion (Halliday and Hasan 1976, Widdowson 1978a) of language at the suprasentential level. In this category I also included knowledge of appropriate paralinguistic and nonverbal behavior. Of course all along it has been the linguistic domain in which much of the *what* research of second language acquisition has centered. Important research has gone on and is continuing in the areas of syntactic and morphological development.[3] I want, however, to discuss research which is being done from a discourse perspective.

Morphology. When Godfrey (1980) conducted an analysis of the errors in English tense morphology produced by ESL learners, he found a large number of errors attributable to the learners' failure to observe discourse constraints — errors resulting from the learners not maintaining tense continuity during a monologue, for example. Godfrey pointed out that these errors would have been overlooked (i.e., would never have been identified as errors) had each sentence produced by the learners been analyzed in isolation. It was only when the learners' speech was viewed from a discourse perspective that the errors were revealed.

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[3] I call to your attention, for example, the current undertaking by Stauble and Schumann to study the acquisition of the form and function of English verb phrase morphology by Spanish and Japanese speakers.

Syntax. In the area of syntax, Celce-Murcia (1980) and some of her students have been engaged in what they call contextual analysis. They ask: "What is the effect of context on the form of syntactic structures?" And they have designed studies to address questions such as:

- When do native speakers permit the use of uninverted questions in conversational spoken English?
- In what context is the passive voice preferred over the active?

Phonology. In the area of phonology, researchers such as Backman (1977; 1979), Gilbert (1980), and Neufeld and Schneiderman (1980) have been investigating the function of prosodic features like intonation. It is a well-established fact that prosodic features play a role in enabling us to differentiate utterance types (questions and statements, for instance) and in emphasizing certain constituents within sentences, but we now recognize the richness of language prosody in connoting other meanings/functions as well. Gasser (1979) includes the following: the identification of the speaker's sex; the division of utterances into information units; the conveying of degrees of certainty; the conveying of the communicative functions of utterances; the marking of the speaker's emotional state; the signaling of humorous, sarcastic, or sexual intent; and the signaling of degrees of formality and the marking of the status relationship existing between the speaker and listener.

A study in the acquisition of *segmental phonology* by Beebe (1980) makes us aware of how narrow our former view of language transfer was. In a study of the pronunciation of American /r/ by Thai learners of English as a second language, Beebe discovered that the learners pronounced the /r/ differently depending upon where it occurred in an English word. This finding may not be surprising in and of itself, but Beebe's explanation of it is. She theorizes that what affected the pronunciation of the /r/ in initial position in a word was the fact that the Thai equivalent for /r/ had social value in the learners' native language in initial position. In other words, the Thai speakers pronounced this phoneme variantly in English depending on its sociolinguistic pattern in Thai. Once again we find evidence that a simple contrastive analysis of linguistic features will no longer suffice to explain language transfer from a first language to a second language.

Discourse. Reminding us of the inadequacy of simple contrastive analyses, researchers like Schmidt (1980) and Schachter and Rutherford (1979) have discovered that errors sometimes occur in ESL learners' English speech which are due not to interference from the learners' native language at the syntactic level, but rather because the discourse constraints or discourse types of the native language and the target language are at variance. For instance, speakers of Mandarin Chinese, intending to produce an English sentence such as *The 747 is a big plane*, might instead render it as *Airplanes, the 747 is big*. They produce sentences like this because, as reported by Schachter and Rutherford and based upon the research of Li and Thompson (1976), Mandarin is a topic-prominent language while English is subject-prominent. The subjects make use of the lexical items of English but adopt the strategy of

relexification or replacement of the Mandarin words in the discourse pattern with English words.

Since I do not mean to neglect the written modality, I should probably point out that early studies like those conducted by Kaplan (1966[1972]) and others on the nonnative rhetorical organization patterns in compositions written by ESL learners would fall into this domain as well. The intent of these researchers is to see if the organizational pattern which ESL learners adhere to in writing English compositions is a product of transfer from their native language. Such studies are an example of research being conducted at the suprasentential or written discourse level.

Another area of investigation which should be conducted on the discourse level, I feel, would include an analysis of the structure of different speech events (Hymes 1971). What is the difference, for instance, between the discourse structure of a lecture and the structure of the ringmaster's monologue? Could some of the reason for foreign university students' struggles with understanding lectures (even when the students are conversationally competent) be their lack of familiarity with the organizational pattern of an American university lecture?

Falling into this domain is all the research which has been done on the differences between planned and unplanned discourse. Krashen (1977) has observed dissimilarities regarding error types and error frequencies of occurrence between the two. Ochs Keenan (1977) and her students have compared unprepared oral stories with planned, written forms of the same stories to show how monologues are altered.

Paralinguistic. In the paralinguistic area (following Wardhaugh 1973) I include characteristics of the oral modality such as the tempo, the volume, the pitch, the openness, and the degree of clipping of verbal language; I also include nonlanguage vocalizations like laughing, sighing, crying, and yawning.

It takes a long time for children to recognize appropriateness with regard to volume and pitch – a fact I am constantly reminded of when I take my 2½-year-old son to the library – but what about in a second language? Does it take a long time for adults to learn to control the volume/pitch of their voices if the appropriateness levels are not the same in the second language as in their native language? "Agrawal shows that speakers of Indian English use heightened pitch to signal that they want to take the floor, and [they] are systematically misunderstood by speakers of British English as intending to show anger" (Tannen 1980).

Another study in the paralinguistic area was conducted by Palmberg (1979) who examined laughs in second language communication. Palmberg claims to have identified a number of different functions of laughs used by second language learners. They can be used as a joke signal, I-know-this-is-not-correct signal, recognition signal, ignorance/embarrassment signal, pause filler, relief signal, and delight signal. Whether laughs are used for these same purposes in all languages remains to be resolved.

I am also reminded of the recurring problem of one of my colleagues at SIT when she goes to Mexico to supervise our student teachers. Her subdued

manner always provokes queries from Mexicans about her health or emotional state. She is neither ill nor melancholy but just quieter than is expected in a Mexican context. Another colleague, raised in an Italian-American family, sometimes finds he has to apologize to people who approach him with trepidation following a spirited meeting because they feel they have angered him, whereas in fact he has simply transferred the paralinguistic features of Italian to English.

Nonverbal behavior. Maltby and Richardson (1978:17) observe that "crucial to the concept of communicative competence is the recognition that a speech community shares not only a language but also rules governing nonverbal behavior and that these rules vary significantly from one speech community to another. The members of a speech community are seldom consciously aware of these rules, yet they react strongly when these rules are broken. It is precisely because the rules are not recognized as such on a conscious level that the reaction is so strong."

Nonverbal action, of course, embraces a whole spectrum of behavior from kinesics (gestures, body movement)—which is usually thought of first—through haptics (touching, physical contact), oculesics (eye movement, eye contact), and proxemics (spacing between interlocutors). Researchers such as Nine-Curt (1975), Taylor (1975), and others (reported in the book by Laver and Hutcheson 1972) have identified some cross-cultural differences in this area, but much work remains to be done.

Speech acts

The second area of awareness that is necessary for successful communication involves the employment of appropriate speech acts. Speech acts, according to Austin (1962), can be accounted for by a ternary taxonomy: locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts (Fraser 1978). I will define the second of these three, since most of the research in speech act acquisition in ESL has been directed towards the study of illocutionary acts. "An illocutionary act is an act performed in saying something—acts such as requesting, promising, complaining, ordering, authorizing, and apologizing would be examples (Fraser and Nolen 1980). You may have heard this area also referred to by second language acquisition researchers like Fraser, Rintell, and Walters (1980) as the area of communicative competence involving the acquisition of pragmatics.

Schmidt and Richards (1980:138) have noted that "For the purpose of investigating speech acts in the context of second language learning, perhaps the most important question is whether and to what extent the various aspects of speech acts . . . are universal." Indeed, of all the research done in this area (and there has been a fair amount) much of it has been directed towards establishing whether or not all English speech acts exist in other languages and if they do, to what extent their forms are comparable. Hatch, Loos, Inoue, Gidden, and Schaefer, for example, are currently engaged in just this sort of endeavor. They are gathering data on the structure of complaints in English, Japanese, and Spanish in order to compare them cross-lingually. They are

examining the complaints they collect according to the sociolinguistic variables of the interlocutors' sex, age and status, the situation, and whether the complaints are registered in speech or writing. The next step after their preliminary analysis of the structure of complaints will be to determine whether foreign students recognize the appropriate form for complaints in English.

D'amico-Reisner (1980) has also conducted research to ascertain if expressions of disapproval are culture-specific. She used various situations where one would normally expect an expression of disapproval to elicit data from nonnative speakers of English. One situation she used was the following. She told her subjects: "I am your father. I have come to your house to visit you. I sit on your new couch to read the paper. I lift my legs and stretch them across the couch. You disapprove. Do you say anything? If so, what?" Speakers from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Vietnam, and Japan chose the no-response option. They would have said nothing to their fathers. Even when the culture did permit an expression of disapproval, it was observed that the form of the expression was determined by the culture of the speaker. The imperative form was used by the English native-speaker group, but was not even an alternative for nonnative speakers who did respond. They preferred to embed their expression of disapproval in an interrogative or declarative form.

Of much significant work in the speech act area let me at least cite Rintell (1979; in press) with her work on the different deference levels of requests and suggestion; Borkin and Reinhart (1978) for their work on the difference between "Excuse me" and "I'm sorry," expressions often confused by ESL students; Walters (1979) for his research on the strategies for requesting in Spanish and English according to the politeness dimension; Fraser (1980), who has observed and reported on the means by which English speakers use nonverbal and verbal insults; Fraser (1981) for his work on apologizing; Fanselow (1977); Politzer (1981); Hamayan and Tucker (1980); Allwright (1980); and of course Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) for their pioneering efforts at identifying functions in classroom discourse. We should also cite Cohen and Olshtain (1981) and Farhady (1980) for their attempts to create a test of sociolinguistic competence; Manes and Wolfson (1981) for their work on compliments; Wolfson (1979) on pseudo-invitations; Scarcella (1979) on the acquisition of politeness features by second language learners; Schmidt (1979 in text) for his work on the acquisition of English directives by nonnative speakers; Carrell and Konneker's research (1981) on judgments of politeness made by both native speakers and nonnative speakers when they made requests ranging from the use of a past tense modal embedded in an interrogative: *Could you give me a pack of Marlboros?* to an elliptical imperative: *A pack of Marlboros.*

Although this is quite an impressive list of studies in the area of speech acts, we've only just scratched the surface. Austin estimates that there are over 1000 speech acts similar to those described in this section.

Propositional content

The area I have termed propositional content[4] has apparently not been thought to have the same fecundity that the speech act area has, for the research potential of this area of communicative competence has been virtually untapped.

As Bycina (1981:28) has argued: "We have to take into account the fact that functional meaning, that is, speech acts . . . is not the only kind of meaning that sentences or utterances convey. Most sentences also contain some kind of proposition which further contributes to the meaning of the sentence. To put it crudely, we do not simply ask a question: we ask a question about something." One of the challenges to the second language learning researchers is to determine if the quantity and quality of the propositional content of utterances is the same regardless of culture.

Grice (1975), for instance, has asserted that in order for conversations to be cooperative ventures, conversationalists follow the maxim "to be as informative as is required, but no more informative than is necessary." However, one piece of evidence against the claim that all cultures require the same amount of information comes from Keenan[5], who discusses how speakers in "Malagasy society regularly provide less information than is required by their conversational partner, even though they have access to the necessary information. For reasons having to do with local customs and beliefs, speakers in that society may avoid identifying people in their utterances. They will obscure the identity of a child in referring to it in conversation, for example, for fear of tempting a malevolent force to intervene." So merely the amount of information included in a conversation may be culture specific.

As to the question of the quality of propositional content and whether all cultures talk about the same things, it is well documented that the content of some functions at least is culture specific. As Richards (1980:419) observes: "Greetings in some cultures may involve questions about the addressee's health; in others, questions about how recently you ate your last meal," and, if I might add, questions about where you are going.

Another whole potentially productive area of research involving the propositional content area might be the study of how people encode and decode the semantics of a message, i.e. speech perception. Among the models of speech perception is the two-stage model of Neisser (brought to our attention by Tarone 1974). In the first stage an utterance is received by a listener. He or she stores the message temporarily in short-term memory. While it is there, it is subjected to preliminary analysis through the application of perceptual strategies. One such strategy is the noun-verb-noun strategy that a listener might apply to an utterance in English (Bever 1970). The listener's strategy is to interpret the noun-verb-noun utterance as corresponding to an actor-

[4] I believe this area corresponds to Widdowson's conceptual or Halliday's ideational function: "language used for thinking, formulating concepts, fashioning propositions" (Widdowson 1980:235).

[5] As quoted in Richards (1980).

action-object schema. While this strategy may not work for every English sentence, it could prove an efficient strategy for deciphering global meaning from many input sentences. Applying Neisser's model to second language acquisition Tarone (1974:232) notes:

> "In second language acquisition, if universal perceptual strategies do exist for the decoding of meaning in the second language, it would appear to be very important to study these processes in their own right and discover what they are and how they influence the shape of the learner's (inter) language."

Finally, there should be one other goal of research in the propositional content category—this would involve attempting to better understand the coherence property of language, the property that Widdowson (1978a) sees as concerned with tying together the contextual meaning of utterances. We have already talked about the cohesive property of texts, but cohesion in texts is basically accomplished through formal devices. Coherence, on the other hand, refers to what ties together the *meanings* in discourse. For instance, if A says to B (Widdowson 1978a:29):

A: That's the telephone.
and B responds:
B: I'm in the bath.
and A rejoins:
A: OK.

there is no formal property that ties these three lines together, although the flow of propositional content in context allows us to appreciate the coherence among these three conversational turns and to make sense of the dialogue.

Interactional

Let us now turn to the area of communicative competence having to do with interactional patterns—knowing when it's one's turn to speak. According to Coulthard (1977) the basic structural unit in conversation is the *adjacency pair*. An example of an adjacency pair was given earlier when I suggested that the woman in the conversation at the restaurant would be perfectly proper in replying to her acquaintance's request for information by stating: "You really should say 'women's room'; it's the first door on your left down that hall." In addition to requests for information and replies, other adjacency pairs can take the form of:

Offer - acceptance
Offer - rejection
Complaint - apology

or simply exchanging greetings. Of course, these pairs obscure the fact that most exchanges have a far more complicated pattern than mere alternation. To give a dramatic example of a complicated interactional pattern, one must only leave the mainstream culture of the United States (where interlocutors

usually do take alternative turns in a conversation) and enter a polychronic cultural setting — the norm for many Latin cultures — where it is customary to find many people speaking at one time, while all engaged in the same conversation! (Fantini, personal communication).

To cite another example of different interactional patterns, consider Tannen's report (1980b:03) that one group of people she studied favored overlap — that is, they favored one person talking at the same time as another. For this group of people, "the overlap is a way of signaling conversational involvement, even if it temporarily obscures the relay of a fully developed message. . . . However . . . for (other groups of speakers), overlap is perceived as interruption and is rejected because it obscures the expression of complete thoughts." So who talks when with whom is a question researchers are just beginning to tackle.

Another aspect in the interactional area might be the consideration of pacing. As Shields (1978) has noted, interactional patterns require the taking into account of the reciprocal behavior of one another. We have all no doubt heard or experienced the fact that Americans are uncomfortable with silence and will jump in and take two turns in a row if the nonnative speaker takes too long (according to American standards) to reply. An interesting question to pursue along these lines would be to measure the tolerance for silence among different cultures. Does your students' silence after you asked them a question indicate a hesitation or simply that they are following the pacing of turn-taking of their culture?

The turn-taking system in conversation is fascinating and very complicated for speakers of all cultures. People are even nominated to take turns or relinquish turns based upon nonverbal behavior. For example, Williams (1979) declares that a person (in our culture) could signal that she or he intends to end a turn — or even a conversation — by eye aversion. This is not true of other cultures, of course, where eye contact is not a component necessary to maintain conversation. Richards (1980) suggests that a turn may be not only nonverbally terminated but also nonverbally initiated. A mere glance at one of the conversational partners may select him or her to be the next speaker. Allwright (1980b) has done an extensive analysis of interaction in a classroom, partly to address the question of how it is that a student is able to procure and relinquish turns. How does a student get an opportunity to speak in an ESL class? According to Allwright, a student in a classroom may procure a turn by any of the following means. He or she may:

Accept:	Respond to a personal solicit
Steal:	Respond to a solicit made to another
Take:	Respond to a general solicit (e.g., a question addressed to the whole class)
Take:	Take an unsolicited turn when a turn is available — discourse maintenance
Make:	Make an unsolicited turn during the current speaker's turn,

without intent to gain the floor (e.g., comments that indicate one is paying attention)

Make: Start a turn, during that of a current speaker, with intent to gain the floor (i.e., interrupt, make a takeover bid)

Make: Take a wholly private turn, at any point in the discourse (e.g., a private rehearsal for pronunciation practice of a word spoken by the teacher)

Miss: Fail to respond to a personal solicit within whatever time is allowed by interlocutor(s) (Allwright 1980b:168-169)

Adopting Allwright's schema would allow us to see how many turns and what type each student in each of our classes obtains.

Others, too, have studied interactional patterns. Early and Salica (1980), for example, have detailed the devices used by ESL students for interrupting in order to gain a turn. And Keller-Cohen (1979) examined the development of turn allocation in children acquiring ESL.

Finally, to return once again to the written form of the language, we should entertain Widdowson's contention (1980:232) that "written discourse operates by means of the same basic interactive procedures as characterize spoken conversation but the absence of reciprocity calls for a different mode of exploitation." In other words, Widdowson believes, as do others, that written discourse is not all that different from spoken with regard to its interactional pattern. The skilled writer has to enact both the reader's and the writer's roles when planning his or her message such that the meaning of the written form is clear without the presence of someone to ask questions when they don't understand. It seems to me that the interactional communicative nature of writing — indeed this entire interactional area of communicative competence — warrants much future attention by researchers.

Strategic competence

Let us conclude our review of the relevant research by considering the fifth area, strategic competence. I have saved it till last because it appears to be qualitatively different from the other competences. Whereas the other four categories we have looked at appear to be more inventories of items and rules (with the exception perhaps of the encoding and decoding strategies referred to in the propositional content area), strategic competence, as I interpret it, seems to entail a dynamic process. It is a superordinate process responsible for controlling the smooth flow of communication. It enables the participant in discourse to draw upon his or her knowledge in the other four areas and to put this knowledge together in a fluent, creative way — as a listener, speaker, reader, or writer. If there are lapses affecting the fluency, a specific strategy may be called upon to help restore communication. I subscribe to Corder's observation (1977:12) that "all speakers, native or otherwise, adopt communicative strategies." Recall the ringmaster who was able to interrupt the flow of his message and repair his utterance when he mispoke: "Ladies and gents, I mean gentlemen. . . ." It is in this area of interrupted communication where much of the second language acquisition research has focused. The research has

been designed to address the questions of 1) what the learner does to communicate when he or she has not fully acquired communicative competence and 2) what native speakers do to facilitate communication with nonnative speakers. We can organize the research by where the gap in the nonnative speaker's competence occurs. For instance, does communication come to a halt because the learner needs a lexical item that he or she doesn't have, or does the learner not know the polite form of a speech act when he or she realizes it is appropriate for the occasion, or does communication break down because the learner does not realize that it is his or her turn to speak?

By way of example, let us look at some of the communicative strategies that learners exploit when they lack essential vocabulary items. Tarone (1978), building on the work of Varadi (1973; 1980), has identified a number of such strategies: The learner who is faced with a communication problem might choose to coin a new word, for instance. Tarone cites the example of an ESL learner trying to identify a balloon in a picture. Not knowing the word *balloon*, the learner instead produces *air ball*. Another strategy that learners utilize is mime—clapping their hands together to mean applause, for example. Message abandonment, a third strategy, is resorted to in extreme cases where the learner begins to talk about a concept but then is unable to continue and just gives up.

In the area of communicative strategies involving speech acts, Kasper (1979) cites the nonnative speaker in his study who has a complaint to make about a certain situation. She realizes that she must soften her complaint, however, because it is not a very serious one. She does not know how to modulate her complaint with something like "I'm terribly sorry but . . ." so she resorts to the strategy of modality reduction and complains much more strongly and directly than she would in her native tongue. Other significant work in the area of communicative strategies has been done by Galvan and Campbell (1978), Fathman (1980), Kellerman (1977), Seliger (1980), Faerch and Kasper (1980), Bialystok and Frohlich (1980), Wong-Fillmore (1976), Blum and Levenston (1978), Krashen and Scarcella (1978), Hamayan and Tucker (1979), Butler-Wall (1980), Dechert (1979), and Glahn (1980). Work by Schwartz (1980) and Gaskill (1980) also falls in this category, although their work is not so much on learner strategies as it is on how the two interlocutors resolve the communication breakdown together. (See Tarone 1980 for discussion.) Although there seem to be quite a number of researchers probing this area, most of the studies view communicative strategies adopted by learners for dealing with their deficiencies in the linguistic area. I know of no studies, for instance designed to identify strategies learners use to compensate for their inadequate knowledge in the interactional area. One would imagine that speakers don't consciously think about interactional patterns and therefore would simply rely on the interactional patterns of their native culture.

With a different focus, but still in the area of communicative strategies, is the extensive research examining what native speakers do in order to adjust their speech to accommodate nonnative speakers. The simplified speech that

natives use when conversing with less proficient nonnatives is termed "foreigner talk" (Ferguson 1971). In her seminal research on foreigner talk, Hatch (1979) developed a long list of strategies adopted by native speakers: Among other things, native speakers slow down, speak louder, use high frequency vocabulary items, and reduce the complexity of their syntactic constructions. Other research undertaken to identify features of foreigner talk has been done by Henzl (1973), Chaudron (1980), Katz (1977), Hatch, Shapira, and Gough (1975), Arthur et al. (1980), Freed (1978), and Carty (1980). Gaies (1977) and Long (1981) have also examined aspects of the English input received by native speakers. Long, in his recently completed dissertation (1980), has done a thorough analysis of a number of features of the conversational interaction between native and nonnative speakers. Hatch (1979) and Peck (1980) have examined conversation between native and nonnative speakers and have speculated as to what the nonnative speakers might be learning from such interactions.

Despite the number of studies in this area, many questions have yet to be fully explored. One such issue might be to determine the extent to which strategic competence is language-specific as opposed to how much can be transferred from one language learning situation to another.

This completes the review of the research being conducted in the communicative competence area that I am aware of. Although I anticipate challenges to the organization I have imposed, I have found it to be a useful framework to help me sort out all the issues surrounding the notion of communicative competence and for recognizing the areas of strength in our research as well as the lacunae.

Implications

Let me now share with you some implications I have drawn from reflecting on all of the preceding. First of all, my intentions will have been misconstrued if you concluded that I am endorsing a "communicative approach"[6] or the wholesale adoption of a notional-functional syllabus. I have made no claims one way or the other about these. I do, however, think there are some general principles which I can derive from the research and work on defining communicative competence that would be helpful in my teaching. There are ten of them (many culled from my experience and discussions with colleagues at SIT).

1. I need to be cognizant of the fact that my students will not be equipped with the full complement of forms for performing a given function in English. I should try to not be offended by my students' limited ability to use polite forms. Rather, I should treat such occasions as opportuni-

[6]I believe this term to be a misnomer if one adheres to Anthony's ternary classification of approach, method and technique. The main assumptions of the so called communicative approach have to do with the nature of language — very little is said about the processes of language learning and teaching.

ties to teach my students about polite forms in their emerging second language competence (paraphrased from Walters 1979).

2. I need to distinguish (following Allwright 1980a) "what is taught" in the classroom from "what is available to be learned." Much can be learned about interactional patterns, for example, from the interactive nature of classroom events without my necessarily planning a lesson to deal with them. I should also recognize that my learners (even young ones) do have communicative competence in another language and that there may be things about English I don't have to teach, things which will reveal themselves if I make an attempt to discover what my students do know.
3. I need to entertain the thought that there may be areas among the ones I've discussed today which I have never taught before but which would be worthwhile additions to my syllabus. I am reminded of Gomes de Matos' tactic (1979) of teaching learners useful phrases to employ when they want to learn something specific about the target language. Expressions like: "Can I ask you a question?" "There's something I don't understand," and so on. I will also reflect upon Palmer and Kimball's suggestion (1977) that sometimes I should give my students communicative tasks that are a little advanced for them—not to frustrate them, but to give them practice with communicative strategies and better prepare them to deal with what they might encounter outside my classroom.
4. I recognize, communicative competence being as demanding as it is, that there is no way my students are going to become fluent communicators if I spend a good deal of my time with them talking about the language rather than letting them use it. As Widdowson (1978b:24) eloquently puts it:

   > "Acquisition and use are interdependent; knowledge is acquired through behavior and behavior derived from knowledge in a process of reciprocal facilitation."

   I will therefore provide my students with ample opportunity to use the language. Of course, I will bear in mind that communicative fluency requires a combination of both adequate interactive ability and *also* accurate construction (Sinclair 1980). I will not ignore the latter for the sake of the former.
5. I will not view my classroom as "an artificial language learning context" (Breen and Candlin 1980:98), but will "seek to exploit the classroom in terms of what it *can* realistically offer as a resource for learning." As Krashen and Seliger (1975) asked six and a half years ago, I will ask myself: What can I provide my students with that they can't easily get outside of my class?
6. When I find my students have committed an error—have not quite said something the way I would—I will think to look beyond the linguistic form and function of the utterance if both of these appear to be correct.

I will look to the other areas of communicative competence that I am aware of for the source of the trouble. I will realize that the error was unintentional and appreciate and use the error because it gives me invaluable information about the stage of development of my students' communicative competence. I will try to give my students meaningful feedback based upon my error analysis—feedback that gets at the trouble spots (recognizing they may be nonlinguistic in nature) which are blocking their progress.

7. I will attempt to be sensitive to the fact that not all learners want to be culturally assimilated and recognize that there may be great resistance to what learners have to do to become truly bilingual. I will recognize that this resistance comes in many forms. As Claire Stanley (personal communication) has observed, sometimes her students will ask her, "Why is it that way?" about some sociolinguistic point in English, when what the student really means is, "Why isn't it like my language!" In any event, I will try to recognize their concerns and keep my expectations of my students in line with why they are studying English (ESL versus EFL, for example), realizing that I won't be able to push them beyond where they want and need to go anyway.
8. I believe and will try to keep uppermost in my mind that only the learner can *do* the learning (Allwright 1980a). I am there to aid in this process. As the fantasy writer George MacDonald (1973:27) has put it: best thing you can do for your fellow [man], next to rousing his conscience is . . . not to give him things to think about, but to wake things up that are in him; or say to make him think things for himself." Since it's impossible for me to teach everything about the language, perhaps the way I can serve my students best is by helping them to learn on their own.
9. I understand that acquiring a second language is not going to happen overnight—that even at the advanced levels there will be a lot to learn—and that I have to try to be patient throughout the process.
10. And finally, I am constantly reminded that language (as I noted at the beginning) is a wonderful tool for individual expression and interpersonal communication. After considering what it takes to be communicatively competent, I come away with a renewed appreciation for the challenge of using language within a context and I am eager to return to the classroom to share my enthusiasm for language with my students.

Conclusion

I admit that this has been a whirlwind tour through research being conducted on communicative competence in the second language field. If I have overwhelmed you with detail, then I have defeated my purpose. Rather than being dismayed by the language teaching task, let us exult in the challenge it provides. Let us strive to make the learning task a meaningful one for learners. Let us appreciate the richness of language. Let us find ways of con-

veying our enthusiasm for language to our students, all the while maintaining a realistic attitude towards their acquisition endeavor.

To "A celebration of language," the theme of this year's convention, I bring a dedication to language teaching born out of a renewed appreciation for language itself.

Won't you all join me in the celebration?

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ED223091

From Theory to Practice

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1. Introduction

Over the past decade, significant progress has been made on a theoretical level concerning the understanding of the nature of second language (L2) acquisition. However, attempts to directly apply this knowledge in a classroom setting have met with only mixed success. Clearly, general approaches to teaching have been altered and modified in recent years based on research in linguistics, sociology, psychology, and education. Yet, curriculum considerations are rarely influenced by specific studies. There seem to be two principal reasons for this discrepancy. First, our theories are inadequately developed and in an inappropriate format for classroom application. Second, we have very little knowledge about the relationship between teaching and learning.

Hatch (1978) pointed out that the researcher and the teacher/materials developer approach the L2 learner from different perspectives. The researcher's primary interest is in questions such as "How are relative clauses acquired?" or "What can be transferred from one's native language?", while the teacher/materials developer must know what the necessary and sufficient conditions for learning are (Newmark 1966). That is, the latter must understand the minimum necessary for learning, whereas the former seeks to understand the nature of the learning process. The present study is designed to integrate these two views by presenting pedagogical results which are theoretically motivated. Comparing the results of research on the L2 acquisition of relative clauses with current textbook practices, I found a discrepancy between the approaches learners take and the approaches textbooks present. In the study reported on in this paper, I devised a pedagogical approach which more closely mirrored what learners do and tested its results against a more traditional textbook approach. Not only is the situation in this study contrary to usual pedagogical practices, but it also violates a major assumption in the ordering of teaching materials: easy structures precede more difficult ones.

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2. Background information

From an investigation of more than 50 languages, Keenan and Comrie (1977) proposed a universal hierarchy of relative clause formation to which all languages of the world adhere. The hierarchy given below, known as the Accessibility Hierarchy, concerns the noun phrase constituents which languages can relativize.

Accessibility Hierarchy

SU >DO >IO >OPREP >GEN >OCOMP

> = more accessible than [1]

The hierarchy is to be interpreted in such a way that if a language allows relativization on a given position, it also allows relativization on any position to the left of it. What is intended is that there is an implicational relationship between different relative clause types such that if a language can form a relative clause on a low position on the hierarchy, it can also form a relative clause on any higher position, but the reverse is not true. The implicational relationship is unidirectional. What differentiates languages of the world is the lowest point on that hierarchy on which relativization can take place.

In addition to the hierarchy being a reflection of universals of relative clause formation, Keenan (1975) and Gass (to appear) further suggested that it represents a natural ordering of difficulty, with the highest position being the easiest and the lowest position the most difficult. Keenan's evidence was based on written data from English taken from a wide variety of sources, while Gass's evidence was taken from L2 learners. They both found the higher positions on the hierarchy easier to relativize than the lower ones. In fact, when looking at accuracy of relativization, with one exception L2 learners maintained the hierarchical orderings suggested by Keenan and Comrie. This was true for all learners, regardless of language background.

The present study was undertaken to determine what the implications of these findings might be for classroom teaching and hence learning. If it is the case that the lower relative clause positions are more difficult, and if there is a hierarchical relationship among the positions, would it be possible to provide instruction only on a low position with the learner easily able to make generalizations to the higher positions? Clearly, in language learning certain structures are easier than others, but without a direct relationship between two structures we would not expect learning a difficult structure to result in its automatic generalization to an easier structure. Yet, in the case of relative clauses where there is a direct relationship between relative clause types, such generalizations may be possible and in fact the norm. In this study I set out to investigate this possibility.

A major criterion in determining order in structural syllabi is complexity. It is assumed that in order to facilitate the learning process, simple structures should precede more complex ones. With regard to relative clauses, most

[1] Examples of relative clause types are:
SU (subject) The man who saw the cat . . .
DO (direct object) The man that the cat saw . . .
IO (indirect object) The man that I gave the book to . . .
OPREP (object of preposition) The table that he is standing on . . .
GEN (genitive) The man whose book I borrowed . . .
OCOMP (object of comparative) The man that he is taller than . . .

grammar-based textbooks deal only with a subset: subject, direct object, genitive, sometimes object of preposition and, rarely, object of comparatives. Often, indirect object relatives and object of preposition relatives are subsumed under the category of object relatives. The order of presentation is generally of two types: (1) they are all presented in one lesson, or (2) they are scattered throughout the textbook with subject and direct object relatives being presented first in both cases. Underlying this ordering is the implicit assumption that by teaching the easy ones first, appropriate generalizations will be made to the more difficult relative clause positions, those which are either not taught at all or which are given the least emphasis. In this paper I will show that this assumption is erroneous when dealing with linguistic data which reflect implicational universals. In fact, the opposite occurs. Greater control over a linguistic structure is noted when only the more difficult aspects are taught.

3. Methodology

Two groups of ESL classes were given instruction in relative clauses. The experimental group consisted of thirteen low-intermediate ESL students enrolled in an Intensive English Language Program. Their native languages were: Arabic, Farsi, Italian, Russian, and Spanish. The control group consisted of five low-intermediate subjects also enrolled in an Intensive English Language Program (the third level of a six level program). Their native languages were: Arabic, Japanese, and Spanish. Both groups were enrolled in courses in which *English Sentence Structure* by Krohn (1977) was the main textbook. They had been using Krohn's book up to the onset of this experiment which began immediately before the book's initial treatment of relative clauses.

Initially, both groups were given two tests[2] intended to determine their pre-instruction knowledge of relative clauses. One was a test of their linguistic awareness of relative clauses and the other of their ability to produce English relative clauses. In the first, subjects were asked to give grammaticality judgments of 29 sentences containing relative clauses of various types, some of which were grammatical and some of which were not. (The errors in the ungrammatical sentences will be discussed below). In addition, subjects were told to correct the sentences they marked ungrammatical. The second test was one in which the subjects were instructed to combine two sentences to form one sentence containing a relative clause. In Figure 1 are listed the intended relative clause types from this second test.

FIGURE 1

Relative clause types used in the sentence-combining test.

SU	SU	example: *The man* fell down. The man came. intended structure: The man who came fell down.

[2]The particular tests used were chosen for ease of comparison with studies on L2 acquisition of relative clauses.

SU	DO	example: The cat ran away. The dog chased the cat. intended structure: The cat that the dog chased ran away.
SU	IO	
SU	OPREP	
SU	GEN	
SU	OCOMP	
DO	SU	
DO	DO	
DO	IO	
DO	OPREP	
DO	GEN	
DO	OCOMP	

These sentences represent the relative clause types discussed by Keenan and Comrie. Instructions given to the subjects on this task were as follows: COMBINE THE TWO SENTENCES OF EACH PROBLEM TO FORM ONE GOOD ENGLISH SENTENCE CONTAINING A RELATIVE CLAUSE. DO NOT USE THE WORDS BECAUSE, WHILE, WHEN, AFTER, SINCE, BEFORE, OR, AND. START WITH THE FIRST SENTENCE IN EACH CASE. Examples of the intended structure were then put on the board and erased before the test began.

Three days following these pre-tests, instruction on relative clauses began. The control group was presented with relative clauses following the format of Krohn with the first relative clause types taught being subject and objects. Indirect object relatives are part of the category entitled objects. Genitives are introduced following these relative clause types, and with less emphasis.

The experimental group was given instruction only on OPREP relatives. There were a number of reasons for selecting this relative clause position as a test case: (1) I wanted to see how much generalizability up the hierarchy was possible. Therefore, a low position was necessary since the expectation was that easier positions would be learned as a result of instruction on a lower position, but not necessarily vice-versa. (2) The genitive was eliminated because, in prior studies, that position had been found to be easier than some higher positions (Gass 1979). (3) The grammaticality of OCOMP relatives as in "It's nice to meet someone that I'm taller than" is questionable in English so that that position seemed an undesirable one to use as a test case. Given these considerations, OPREP was the lowest possible position which could be successfully utilized to answer the questions posed at the outset of this study.

Instruction was given to both groups for approximately three days. At times, other unrelated structures (such as verb tenses in simplex sentences) were discussed in class, but the bulk of the time was devoted to explanations of and exercises on relative clauses. For the experimental group, the exercises that were given were similar to those the control group was given from Krohn. Approximately two days after instruction terminated, all students were tested

TABLE 1

Pre-instruction results for control and experimental groups.

CONTROL GROUP

SENTENCE COMBINING (n = 10)[1]

Sentence Types	% Correct
SU	20
DO	10
IO	0
OPREP	10
GEN	0
OCOMP	0

[1]There were two sentences in each type and five subjects.

GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT

	No. Correct	n	p[2]
All sentences	73	145	ns
Sentences with pronoun retention			
a. SU	0	5	ns
b. DO	1	5	ns
c. IO/OPREP	1	5	ns
d. GEN	2	10	ns
e. OCOMP	0	5	ns
Sentences with non-adjacent RC's	7	30	ns
Sentences with morphology errors	4	10	ns
Sentences with inappropriate marker omission	6	10	ns

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

SENTENCE COMBINING (n = 26)

Sentence Types	% Correct
SU	35
DO	23
IO	4
OPREP	8
GEN	15
OCOMP	0

GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT

	No. Correct	n	p
All sentences	195	377	ns
Sentences with pronoun retention			
a. SU	4	13	ns
b. DO	4	13	ns
c. IO/OPREP	5	13	ns
d. GEN	16	26	ns
e. OCOMP	3	13	ns
Sentences with non-adjacent RC's	33	78	ns
Sentences with morphology errors	13	26	ns
Sentences with inappropriate marker omission	23	26	< .01

[2]Significance was determined by confidence intervals using the binomial distribution when n < 25 and a z score for all cases in which n > 25.

on their knowledge of all relative clauses using tests similar to those of the pre-test, but with different lexical items.

4. Results

Table 1 presents the results of pre-instruction tests for both groups on both tasks.

As can be seen, neither group possessed much identifiable knowledge of relative clauses. In a comparison of overall performance between the two groups on pre-instruction tests, a non significant ± value of 1.19 was obtained.

Table 2 presents the post-instruction scores for both groups on both tasks. Errors on the production task were considered only if there was an error in the formation of the intended relative clause structure. Agreement errors, tense errors, etc. were not considered, as they were beyond the scope of this study.

TABLE 2

Post-instruction results for control and experimental groups.

CONTROL GROUP

SENTENCE COMBINING (n = 10)

Sentence Types	% Correct
SU	60
DO	40
IO	0
OPREP	50
GEN	10
OCOMP	0

GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT

	No. Correct	n	p
All sentences	90	145	<.01
Sentences with pronoun retention			
a. SU	3	5	ns
b. DO	2	5	ns
c. IO/OPREP	1	5	ns
d. GEN	2	10	ns
e. OCOMP	1	5	ns
Sentences with non-adjacent RC's	13	30	ns
Sentences with morphology errors	6	10	ns
Sentences with inappropriate marker omission	4	10	ns

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

SENTENCE COMBINING (n = 26)

Sentence Types	% Correct
SU	65
DO	65
IO	46
OPREP	65
GEN	27
OCOMP	50

GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT

	No. Correct	n	p
All sentences	265	377	<.01
Sentences with pronoun retention			
a. SU	6	13	ns
b. DO	10	13	<.01
c. IO/OPREP	10	13	<.01
d. GEN	14	26	ns
e. OCOMP	10	13	<.01
Sentences with non-adjacent RC's	42	78	ns
Sentences with morphology errors	19	26	<.01
Sentences with inappropriate marker omission	23	26	.01

To ascertain if the experimental group actually differed from the control group in terms of 'amount' learned, paired ±-tests were done. With regard to the grammaticality judgment task, pre- and post-test scores of both the experimental and control groups were compared, with a significant difference being found only in the experimental group. That is, the differences between pre- and post-test results for the control group were not statistically significant. These results are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Comparison of pre- and post-instruction results on

SENTENCE COMBINING

Control Group

Position	relativized	pre-	post-	paired ±-test	p
a.	SU	2	6	2.16	$< .05$
b.	DO	1	4	1.5	ns
c.	IO	0	0	0	ns
d.	OPREP	1	5	3.2	$< .025$
e.	GEN	0	1	0	ns
f.	OCOMP	0	0	0	ns

SENTENCE COMBINING

Experimental Group

Position	relativized	pre-	post-	paired ±-test	p
a.	SU	9	17	4.42	$< .0005$
b.	DO	6	17	3.86	$< .005$
c.	IO	1	12	3.86	$< .005$
d.	OPREP	2	17	5.23	$< .0005$
e.	GEN	4	7	.09	ns
f.	OCOMP	0	13	4	$< .005$

GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT

Control Group

$\pm = 1.6$, ns

GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT

Experimental Group

$\pm = 3.49$, $p < .005$

With regard to the sentence-combining task, a comparison was made between the overall results on the different relative clause types of the pre- and post-test scores for both groups. These results are also presented in Table 3. There were significant differences in both groups; however, the way in which these differences are manifested is clearly not the same, as will be discussed below. This is further confirmed by the additional comparison of the post-instruction results of control and experimental groups on the combining task ($+ = 3.63$, $p < 01$). Clear differences emerge in the overall patterns of response.

5. Discussion

I will limit myself primarily to a discussion of the results of the experimental group to show what sorts of generalizations were made based on the type of instruction that was given to the students.

Considering first the results of the grammaticality judgment task, pre-instruction knowledge seemed to be minimal. In this task four variables were considered:

a. Adjacency	—	*The man was walking very fast that I saw.
b. Pronoun retention	—	*The man that I saw him was walking very fast.
c. Relative marker morphology	—	*I left my purse in an office who was locked.
d. Inappropriate marker omission	—	*The man saw the girl is my brother.

Incorrect sentences were presented reflecting each of these variables. Of the four, there was significant pre-instruction knowledge only of sentences with inappropriately omitted relative clause markers as can be seen in Table 1. Why should this be the case? That is, how does this error type differ from the others tested? This error type is the only one which, in addition to being grammatically incorrect, impedes interpretability of the sentence. For the others, a reasonable amount of semantic interpretation can be given; sentences like a-c above are easily understood, or at least the learner can make some sense out of them. On the other hand, a sentence like the one in d above can be given more than one interpretation. In Gass (to appear), I have argued that in doing tests of grammaticality judgments, we can assume that there are at least two steps a learner takes in determining the grammaticality/ungrammaticality of a given sentence. First, a learner must be able to give some semantic interpretation to the sentence, for, if s/he cannot do so, it is unlikely that it will be marked grammatical. Only then, can a learner proceed in determining whether or not it fits the patterns of his/her interlanguage. It is this first step which probably has influenced these learners in their decision.

Given the remaining three variables, adjacency, morphology, and pronoun retention, there were significant results on the post-instruction test only for the latter two; that is, morphology and pronoun retention. Recognition of adjacency errors on the post-instruction task did not reach a level of significance less than .05. Why is adjacency different from the other variables investigated? It does seem that there is an important difference which distinguishes adjacency errors from pronoun retention and morphology errors: the latter two are morphologically overt and hence easily recognizable. A sentence with a nonadjacent relative clause marker has no salient properties to make a learner aware of its ungrammaticality. Furthermore, it does not impede semantic interpretation in any way, at least not in the sentences presented to these learners.[3]

Students' ability to recognize pronoun retention errors in relative clauses was clearly different from what it had been on the pre-test. Initially, there was no significant recognition on any of the sentence types, yet after instruction students were able to recognize pronoun retention errors in all but subject and genitive positions. Learners generalized from the instruction given to both higher and lower positions on the Accessibility Hierarchy, a fact which is potentially inconsistent with the hypothesis that the Accessibility Hierarchy is psychologically real, with the highest positions being easier than the lower ones. However, it appears that the comparative 'than' may have been treated in a like manner to prepositions. It may be that the learners had not yet learned to differentiate syntactically between the comparative marker and prepositions. If this is the case, this would not be a counter example to the psychological reality of the Accessibility Hierarchy since the two positions would be collapsed. However, more significant is the fact that generalizations were not made to subject and genitive positions. Several explanations are possible. It could be that learners made the generalization only to the morphological *form* of the pronoun. They had been taught that sentences like 'The boy that I talked about him. . .' are ungrammatical. Subject and genitive are the only positions which do not use object pronouns, hence blocking that generalization. That is, a subject relative would be 'The boy that *he* went to the store. . .' and a genitive would be 'The boy that *his* brother. . .' Neither one of these uses an object pronoun. The learners may have thus learned that the forms him/her/them do not appear in relative clauses, without learning anything about the rules which generate them. A good test case for the hypothesis that generalizations were made to the form and not to the function would come from the feminine, since in that case the possessive form 'her' is identical to the object form. If a generalization had been made to the form rather than the function, we would expect that learners would not have difficulty with the feminine and would hence reject a sentence like 'The woman who her girlfriend just left. . .' while at the same time accepting 'The man who his girlfriend just left. . .' Unfortunately, all the sentences given included reference

[3]In Gass 1980, the native speakers who served as a control group for the study of the acquisition of relative clauses made production errors only in the category of adjacency, suggesting that this 'error' type is probably common in everyday speech and while it may be prescriptively incorrect, descriptively it is not.

only to a masculine NP so that this possibility could not be further investigated. However, interesting is the fact that 'I saw the man who kicked him,' which is clearly grammatical, gave many subjects difficulty on the grammaticality judgment task. The presence of the pronoun 'him' seemed to confuse them. When the students corrected this sentence, they deleted 'him'. This does suggest that the generalization was made to the pronominal form.

Still another possibility for the lack of generalization to subject and genitive positions is that pronoun retention in these positions was not interpreted in the same way as it is in other positions. Since in those two positions the pronoun is adjacent to the relative clause marker, it may have been considered part of the marker as opposed to being part of the restricting sentence as in the other positions.

In looking at overall accuracy on the sentence combining task,[4] we can clearly see that most learners were not limited to learning the OPREP relative, but rather did generalize what they had been taught to other positions, with the exception of the genitive. This is clearly consistent with previous results of this type (Gass 1979, Liceras 1981) in which the genitive was found to be different from the other relative clause types. It is also the case that the genitive marker 'whose' cannot be intuited. Since it was not taught, it is not surprising that that position was not produced accurately. Of the 26 genitive relative clauses, 8 were written with *who his*, suggesting that despite the anomalous marker, generalizations were made to this position, even though there were fewer made (8) than to the others (12-17). Considering the individual scores for the subjects, 11 of the 13 had results that indicated knowledge of all the relative clause types higher than OPREP, two didn't 'learn' at all, but no one limited their knowledge to OPREPs. In contrast, for the control group, learning was limited to what had been specifically dealt with in class. Table 4 shows the percent improvement for both groups.

TABLE 4

Percent improvement on sentence combining
for both control and experimental groups

Control Group		Experimental Group	
SU	40	SU	30
DO	30	DO	39
IO	0	IO	42
OPREP	40	OPREP	57
GEN	10	GEN	12
OCOMP	0	OCOMP	50

[4]Overall accuracy is the only measure which can be meaningfully dealt with in this paper. I have presented elsewhere (Gass 1980) a more detailed analysis of specific error types. The results here do not differ significantly from those previously reported. However, a comparison of pre- and post-test results is misleading because of the role avoidance plays.

6. Conclusion

We might ask what all this suggests for classroom teaching. We generally assume that an easy structure should precede a more complex related one and that, as a consequence, learning best proceeds from easy to complex. In this case the opposite effect was noted. A greater ability to use one's knowledge productively was found when the more difficult structure was presented. It is worthwhile to point out again that this was found to be the case in a situation in which there was an implicational relationship between the items in question. I do not wish to claim that because generalizations can occur in this way, they always will and that we should not teach certain relative clause types. I am suggesting rather that a more efficacious model for syllabus design in this case would be one in which a more difficult structure preceded an easier one. We need to take greater advantage of the 'natural' abilities with which learners come into the classroom, because these abilities can facilitate the learning process. When the textbook order contradicts a learner's natural orderings, inhibition of the learning process may result.

We have seen that the results from studies designed to determine the nature of relative clause acquisition have been used to determine the necessary and sufficient conditions for learning, thereby avoiding in Hatch's terms the 'leaps of logic' (Hatch 1978) one often makes when going from theory to practice.

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ED223092

Relative Difficulty of Request Forms in L1/L2 Comprehension

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Introduction

The number of different variables which may affect the acquisition of a particular aspect of a second language is staggering, and includes such general classes of variables as properties of the target language, interference from the native language, individual learner characteristics, situational and motivational factors, etc. Thus, when we can isolate and identify a particular variable as contributing to the acquisition of some such aspect of the target language, we feel we have made progress indeed. The study reported in this paper hopefully represents such progress.

Previous work by Clark and Lucy (1975) demonstrated that certain syntactic forms used to convey indirect requests were more easily interpreted by adult native speakers of English than other forms. A follow-up study (Carrell 1981) demonstrated that the relationship between request form and ease of comprehension was strikingly similar for children ages 4 to 7 in the process of acquiring English as their native language. These two studies raised the question of L2 acquisition. Is the relationship between request form and ease of comprehension found by Clark and Lucy (1975) for native English-speaking adults and by Carrell (1981) for native English-speaking children also the pattern in second language acquisition? If it is, the finding of such a stable hierarchy of relative ease or difficulty of comprehension, not only across various stages of the acquisition of English as a first and as a second language but also into fully proficient native adult competence, would suggest that comprehension of these forms is dependent upon linguistic properties of the forms, rather than on other variables such as cognitive development, learning strategies, influence of native language, motivation, context, or situation, etc.

The study reported on in this paper was designed to address these general issues. Specifically, it addresses the questions: "How well are intermediate and advanced adult learners of English as a second language able to comprehend various syntactic forms conveying indirect requests?" and "How does the relation between request form and ease of comprehension compare among the three groups: L1 children, L1 adults, and L2 adults?"

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[1]I gratefully acknowledge the collaboration of former student Christina Wu, who administered the test and performed a preliminary analysis of the results. However, I assume sole responsibility for the final data analysis and interpretation, as well as the writing of this paper. I also gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of CESL and its faculty and staff in providing access to some of the subjects used in the study.

Method

Subjects. Eighty-two ESL students at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale served as subjects in this study. Eight were matriculated undergraduate students who had the equivalent of 500 or more on the TOEFL. Most of these undergraduates were in their second semester of English composition. The remaining 74 were all intensive English students at our Center for English as a Second Language (CESL). The CESL students were drawn from the upper three (of four) regular proficiency levels. Other subject characteristics are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Subject Characteristics

	N	Proficiency Level	English Study prior to coming to U.S.	Time in the U.S.
	22	CESL 2 Low-Intermediate	5.2 years	2.4 months
	25	CESL 3 Intermediate	4.8 years	3.4 months
	27	CESL 4 High-Intermediate	3.9 years	5.1 months
	8	Univ. Undergrad advanced	5.6 years	20.1 months
Total	82			

Materials/Design. Twenty different requests, the ten pairs shown in Table 2, were used in this study.

TABLE 2

Basic Requests Listed by Pairs

Pairs		Basic Requests	Polarity of Conveyed Meaning	Polarity of Literal Meaning/ Surface Polarity
1	a	Please color the circle blue.	Positive	Positive
	b	Please don't color the circle blue.	Negative	Negative
2	a	Can you make the circle blue?	Positive	Positive
	b	Must you make the circle blue?	Negative	Positive
3	a	Why not color the circle blue?	Positive	Negative
	b	Why color the circle blue?	Negative	Positive
4	a	I would love to see the circle colored blue.	Positive	Positive
	b	I would hate to see the circle colored blue.	Negative	Negative
5	a	You should color the circle blue.	Positive	Positive
	b	You shouldn't color the circle blue.	Negative	Negative
6	a	Shouldn't you color the circle blue?	Positive	Negative
	b	Should you color the circle blue.	Negative	Positive
7	a	The circle really needs to be painted blue.	Positive	Positive
	b	The circle doesn't really need to be painted blue.	Negative	Negative
8	a	Doesn't the circle really need to be painted blue?	Positive	Negative
	b	Does the circle really need to be painted blue?	Negative	Positive
9	a	I'll be very happy if you make the circle blue.	Positive	Positive + Positive
	b	I'll be very sad if you make the circle blue.	Negative	Negative + Positive
10	a	I'll be very sad unless you make the circle blue.	Positive	Negative + Negative
	b	I'll be very happy unless you make the circle blue.	Negative	Positive + Negative

The requests were, in fact, those originally tested by Clark and Lucy (1975) and Carrell (1981) with L1 adults and children, respectively. The requests were intended to represent a number of categories, especially those discussed by Gordon and Lakoff (1971). They consisted of a pair of direct requests, pair 1a and 1b: *Please color the circle blue*, and *Please don't color the circle blue*. The remaining pairs were all indirect requests of a wide variety—some were derived from speaker-based sincerity conditions (declarative statements such as pair 4a and 4b: *I would love to see the circle colored blue*, and *I would hate to see the circle colored blue*), some were derived from addressee-based sincerity conditions (interrogative forms such as pair 2a and 2b: *Can you make the circle blue?* and *Must you make the circle blue?*), and some conveyed requests derived from addressee-based reasonableness conditions (such as pair 3a and 3b: *Why not color the circle blue?*, and *Why color the circle blue?*).

Each pair consists of a positive and a corresponding negative member, in terms of the polarity of the conveyed meaning of the request. The first member of each pair (the 'a' member) always conveys a positive request to color the picture the named color. The second member (the 'b' member) always conveys a negative request to color the picture an opposite color. Pairs like this were chosen since much is already known about explicit positive and negative sentences in English (Clark and Clark 1977). Inclusion of positive and negative indirect requests enable us to test for any differences between positives and negatives in conveyed meaning force.

In addition, certain subsets of the pairs enable us to test separately for the contributions of surface polarity or polarity of literal meaning as well as for polarity of conveyed meaning. Compare, for example, pairs 5a and b and 6a and b. In 5a *You should* is positive in terms of both its conveyed request meaning and its literal statement meaning. In 5b *You shouldn't* is negative in terms of both its conveyed request meaning and its literal statement meaning. In 6a *Shouldn't you?* is positive in its conveyed request meaning, but negative in its literal interrogative meaning. In 6b *Should you?* is negative in its conveyed request meaning, but positive in its literal interrogative meaning.

Procedure

Simultaneously, with oral and written instructions, subjects were told that they would hear 40 tape-recorded requests to color a circle blue or not to color a circle blue. In the latter case, they were told, some other color, i.e. red, was the color the speaker really desired. They were further told that immediately after hearing each request, the experimenter would show them either a blue or red circle. They were told to consider the displayed circle as a response to the speaker's request. They were to decide whether the speaker would like the experimenter's displayed choice of colored circle. If they thought so, they were to circle the (a) alternative on the answer sheet that read "likes." If they thought the speaker wouldn't like the experimenter's choice, they were to circle the (b) alternative on the answer sheet that read "doesn't like."

Each of the twenty requests occurred twice on the tape, once followed by presentation of a red circle and once by a blue circle. Thus, for each request

there was an appropriate or "true" display, for which subjects should have indicated that the speaker likes the experimenter's display, and an inappropriate or "false" display, for which subjects should have indicated that the speaker doesn't like the experimenter's display. Therefore, for each of ten request pairs, there were four combinations of conveyed polarity and "true" or "false" display. Cf Table 3.

TABLE 3

Combinations of Conveyed Polarity and Response

		Display	
		(T) speaker likes = appropriate = "true" = +	(F) speaker doesn't like = inappropriate = "false" = −
Conveyed Polarity of Request	(a) positive	(a) (T) + +	(a) (F) + −
	(b) negative	(b) (T) − +	(b) (F) − −

e.g. 4a "I would love to see the circle colored blue."

(blue) + +

4a "I would love to see the circle colored blue."

(red) + −

4b "I would hate to see the circle colored blue."

(red) − +

4b "I would hate to see the circle colored blue."

(blue) − −

The 40 requests were recorded on audio-tape in random order by a native speaker using normal conversational intonation. Immediately after each request, the experimenter displayed the circle. This was followed by a ten-second pause on the tape. This interval provided subjects more than ample time to indicate their responses on the answer sheets. The entire procedure was demonstrated with two examples prior to beginning the task. Testing began when all in each group of subjects acknowledged that they understood the task. Subjects were tested by classroom groups.

Although the twenty requests used in this study were identical to those used by both Clark and Lucy (1975) and by Carrell (1981), and although I shall compare all three sets of results, the studies differed in several ways. First, like Clark and Lucy (1975), this task was a sentence/picture verification task. However, Carrell (1981) used a behavioral response task – the L1 children had to actually color circles the requested color. Second, like Carrell (1981), the basic measure in this study was correctness, i.e. correctly determining whether the speaker would or wouldn't like the experimenter's displayed circle. However, in Clark and Lucy (1975), the basic measure was response latency, elapsed time between onset of the display and the subject's response. Finally, in the Clark and Lucy (1975) study, the requests contained both the words *red* and *blue*, thus doubling the number of requests. In this study, due to limitations on the time during which we had access to our subjects, 40 requests were all that could be realistically presented.

Results

The results of this study are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Results — Percentage of Correct Responses

Pairs	Basic Requests	% Of Correct Responses at Each Proficiency Level N = 22 Low-Intermed	N = 25 Intermed	N = 27 High-Intermed	N = 8 Advanced	N = 82 Total
1a	Please do	95.5	94	88.9	87.5	92.1
b	Please don't.	45.5 ○	68	61.1 ○	93.8	62.2
2a	Can you?	95.5	90	92.6	81.3	91.5
b	Must you?	4.5 □	14 □	22.2 □	43.8 ○	17.1 □
3a	Why not?	93.2	74	68.5	62.5 ○	76.2
b	Why color?	6.8 □	32 □	20.4 □	62.5 ○	24.4 □
4a	I would love.	97.7	84	85.2	87.5	88.4
b	I would hate.	15.9 □	34 □	40.7 □	81.3	36.0 □
5a	You should.	93.2	84	83.3	87.5	86.6
b	You shouldn't.	15.9 □	58 ○	42.6 ○	93.8 ○	45.1
6a	Shouldn't you?	79.5	48 ○	68.5	56.3 ○	64.0
b	Should you?	4.5 □	16 □	27.8 □	43.8 ○	19.5 □
7a	The circle needs.	86.4	74	88.9	87.5	83.6
b	The circle doesn't need.	27.3 □	58 ○	55.6 ○	87.5	51.9 ○
8a	Doesn't the circle?	61.4 ○	58 ○	63.0	43.8 ○	59.2
b	Does the circle?	11.4 □	24 □	40.7 ○	81.3	31.7 □
9a	I'll be very happy if.	93.2	92	87.0	87.5	90.2
b	I'll be very sad if.	4.5 □	42 ○	55.6 ○	68.8 ○	39.0 □
10a	I'll be very sad unless.	86.4	56 ○	48.1 ○	81.3	64.0
b	I'll be very happy unless.	4.5 □	20 □	14.8 □	25. □	14.6 □
	Total Test	51.1 ○	56	57.8	72.2	56.9

○ = chance range. □ = below chance range.

In these results, the responses to the "true" and "false" items are combined.[2] Circled numbers are within the chance range; boxed numbers are below the chance range.

In terms of total test performance, i.e. looking across the bottom of Table 4, the total percentage of correct responses, 56.9%, is above chance performance. (The range of percentages of "chance" performance varies with the number of data points being considered; for total test performance by all 82 subjects on all 40 items, the chance range is 48-52%.) This result indicates that the subjects performed slightly better than chance, though not at all proficiency levels and not on all items. Further, total test results clearly show a general developmental pattern of acquisition for the four proficiency levels and not on all items. Further, total test results clearly show a general developmental pattern of acquisition for the four proficiency levels represented in the study. The 51.1% performance of the low-intermediate group is within the chance range (47-53%); the performance of the intermediate group is slightly better at 56% correct responses, and exceeds the chance range (again 47-53%). The high-intermediate group did better yet, at 57.8%, again exceeding chance (47-53%). The advanced group did best of all, getting 72.2% correct, again exceeding chance (45-55%). In every case, the difference between the performance of one proficiency level was statistically significantly better ($p < .05$) than that of the next lower proficiency level as shown by a test of significant differences in proportions from independent samples. This is the same type of developmental pattern found in the grade-age results for L1 children (Carrell 1981).

Another general result shows each negative conveyed request more difficult than its positive counterpart. For every pair of requests, looking down the rightmost column of Table 4, the negative or 'b' member of the pair has a lower percentage of total correct responses than the positive or 'a' member of the pair. Each of these pair-wise comparisons was statistically significant by the test of significant differences in proportions, $p < .01$, one-tail test. In fact, with only one exception, all positive or 'a' requests as a group were easier than all negative or 'b' requests as a group; the sole exception is that 1b was easier than 8a.

The interior of Table 4 shows a number of specific results for each request form. Certain of the requests were much more difficult than others, inducing greater numbers of errors, especially among the lower proficiency levels. First, a number of the requests were understood correctly above the chance levels. This is particularly true for the positive requests. Second, however, the percentages for a large number of the requests fall into the chance ranges, mean-

[2]The general pattern of results revealed that, in response to positive requests to color the circle blue, an appropriate or "true" display (i.e. with a blue circle) was more accurately judged than an inappropriate or "false" display (i.e. with a red circle). In response to negative requests, to not color the circle blue, an inappropriate or "false" display (i.e. with a blue circle) was more accurately judged than an appropriate or "true" display (i.e. with a red circle). In other words, + + (positive-true) items were more accurately judged than + – (positive-false); and – – (negative-false) items were more accurately judged than – + (negative-true). This pattern corresponds to similar findings in true/false sentence/picture verification tasks (Clark and Lucy 1975; Clark and Chase 1972; Clark and Chase 1974).

ing that for those cells in Table 4, we cannot rule out mere guessing on the part of our subjects. (Chance ranges for the low-intermediate, intermediate, and high-intermediate levels, N = 22, 25, and 27, are approximately 35-65%; for the advanced group, N = only 8, and the chance range is somewhat broader, 26-74%.) What is even more interesting are the percentages which are *below* chance, where performance was far worse than chance. These results indicate systematic miscomprehension. Of greatest difficulty was request number 10b (*I'll be happy unless*) with the unmarked positive adjective *happy* and the marked negative subordinate conjunction *unless*. What is surprising is that all proficiency levels performed far better on number 10a (*I'll be sad unless*), essentially a double negative: negative adjective *sad* and negative conjunction *unless* together conveying a positive request.

Besides 10b, the next most difficult requests were numbers 2b, 6b, 3b, and 8b. In these requests, the literal or surface polarity is positive while the conveyed polarity is negative. Evidently, this difference between literal and conveyed polarity seriously interfered with comprehension. Our subjects, especially at the lower proficiency levels, were heavily influenced by and confused by the literal polarity in their response to the conveyed meaning. Only at the advanced proficiency level does the number of chance and systematic misunderstandings for these requests noticeably decrease.

These findings about certain request forms, especially those complex forms with discrepant literal and conveyed polarity, being systematically misunderstood by ESL students at lower proficiency levels again corresponds to a similar finding for L1 children, especially at the younger grade-age levels (Carrell 1981), and for L1 adults (Clark and Lucy 1975).

In order to compare the results for each proficiency level, consider Table 5, which shows the comparative rank orderings in terms of relative proficiency level.

TABLE 5

Rank-Order Comparison of Relative Correctness by Proficiency Levels

Request #	Overall Rank	Multiple Rank Orders by Proficiency Level			
		Low-Intermed	Intermed	High-Intermed	Advanced
1a	1	2.5	1	2.5	5.5
2a	2	2.5	3	1	10.5
9a	3	5	2	4	5.5
4a	4	1	4.5	5	5.5
5a	5	5	4.5	6	5.5
7a	6	7.5	6.5	2.5	5.5
3a	7	5	6.5	7.5	14.5
6a	8.5	9	13	7.5	16
10a	8.5	7.5	12	13	10.5
1b	10	11	8	10	1.5
8a	11	10	10	9	18
7b	12	12	10	11.5	5.5
5b	13	13.5	10	14	1.5
9b	14	18.5	14	11.5	13
4b	15	13.5	15	15.5	10.5
8b	16	15	17	15.5	10.5
3b	17	16	16	19	14.5
6b	18	18.5	18	17	18
2b	19	18.5	19	18	18
10b	20	18.5	17	20	20

A measure of the relative homogeneity or consistency across all proficiency levels is given by Kendall's τ. Kendall's coefficient of concordance for these data is $W = .767$, whose significance is tested by converting it to an F-ratio, $F_{1,15} = 9.88$, $p < .01$. Thus, although the rank-orderings for each proficiency level, from the easiest (highest percentage of correct responses) to the most difficult, vary somewhat, the large and statistically significant coefficient of concordance indicates that the same request had essentially the same relative degree of ease or difficulty for each proficiency level.

A final result of this study is illustrated in Table 6, which compares the findings for L1 adults (Clark and Lucy 1975) and L1 children (Carrell 1981) to these findings for L2 adults.

TABLE 6

Rank-Order Comparison with L1 Adults (Clark and Lucy 1975) and L1 Children (Carrell 1981)

Request #	L1 Adults	L1 Children	L2 Adults
1a	1	2	1
5a	2	1	5
4a	3	4	4
1b	4	7	10
7a	5	5	6
2a	6	10	2
3a	7	11	7
5b	8	6	13
6a	9	14	8.5
4b	10	8.5	15
9a	11	3	3
2b	12	16	19
3b	13	18	17
9b	14	8.5	14
7b	15	12	12
8b	16	17	16
6b	17	19	18
8a	18	15	11
10b	19	20	20
10a	20	13	8.5

If we interpret Clark and Lucy's (1975) mean response latencies for L1 adults as indications of relative ease/difficulty in mental processing (shorter response latency corresponds to relative ease; longer response latency corresponds to relative difficulty), and if we interpret the percentages of total correct responses for L1 children (Carrell 1981) and L2 adults similarly as indications of relative ease/difficulty of mental processing (higher percentages of correct responses correspond to relative ease; lower percentages of correct responses correspond to relative difficulty), and if we rank order these hierarchies from easiest to most difficult, we get the rank orderings shown in Table 6. Kendall's coefficient of concordance for these three rank orderings is $W = .851$, whose significance is tested by converting it to an F-ratio, $F_{3,6} = 11.41$, $p < .01$. Therefore, there is a statistically significant correlation among the relative ease/difficulty of these different conveyed requests for L1 adults, L1 children, and L2 adults. The main differences were, of course, that the L1 adults tended to interpret all of the requests correctly—but took varying amounts of mental processsing time to do so; the L1 children and the L2 adults, the "acquiring" groups, frequently did not interpret the requests correctly.

Discussion

The findings of this study may be summarized as follows: (1) ESL learners are able to comprehend a wide variety of indirect requests; (2) there is evidence of a developmental pattern of acquisition of indirect requests in general; (3) each positive conveyed request is easier than its corresponding negative conveyed request; (4) taken as a group, with only a single exception, all positive conveyed requests are easier than all negative conveyed requests; (5) ESL learners are heavily influenced by the surface or literal polarity of the conveyed request; (6) the relative ease of comprehension of each kind of indirect request is consistent across each proficiency level; and (7) the relative ease of comprehension of each kind of indirect request is also consistent with the relative ease for L1 adults and L1 children.

The most interesting of these findings, I believe, is the last one. The fact that the rank orderings from the easiest to the most difficult are stable not only across various stages of the acquisition of English as a first *and* as a second language but also into fully proficient native adult competence suggests that relative ease or difficulty in the acquisition of comprehension competence of these forms is dependent upon the linguistic (syntactic/semantic/pragmatic) properties of the request forms, rather than on any other variables such as cognitive development, learning strategies, learner characteristics, motivational factors, language input, and environment, etc. In the case of these request forms we appear to be dealing with a set of purely linguistic properties.

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ED223093

English Nominal Compounds and the ESL/EFL Reader[1]

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Compounding as a process of stringing words together in order to create new words seems to be a universally productive way in which to add to the word stock of a language. Yet the particular combinatory rules of compounding which operate in a given language tend to be idiosyncratic to that language and thus subject to specific constraints. The learner of a second or foreign language is thus liable to encounter both structural and semantic difficulties in this domain.

In English, noun compounding (noun + noun) is a particularly productive process and has been of interest to linguists and grammarians of all times. A variety of approaches have been employed in explaining English compounds. For the present discussion we need to distinguish between the forms often referred to as *lexicalized* compounds – those with a set or frozen meaning, which have become lexical items, such as *ice-cream, dishwasher*, etc. – and those that are derived as a result of the incidental use of this creative process by any native speaker/writer, most often perhaps journalists, scientists, and other technical writers. A term like *power saver switch*, which could appear in the instruction pamphlet accompanying an electrical piece of equipment, will be easily understood by the speaker of English even when encountered for the first time. It is the latter type, the nonlexicalized, incidental compound, that is the focus of the present paper.

In the interpretation of compounds it is generally assumed that the underlying semantic-syntactic relations which hold between the adjuncts compounded can be accounted for through an appropriate sentential paraphrase. Such a paraphrase is, however, rather difficult at times. And as Li (1971) claims, compounds are in general rather poorly paraphrasable. Similarly, Gleitman and Gleitman (1970) point out that semantically there seems to be a permanent association between the elements of a compound, but that the variety of such associations is most bewildering and complex. It would be next to impossible, even for a native speaker, to interpret the meaning of a compound like *pickpocket* or *salesman* correctly, unless that meaning has been learned previously as a set expression. The meaning of most lexicalized compounds must therefore be learned, both by the native and nonnative learner, as if they were individual, single lexical items.

From the point of view of the ESOL learner, we shall regard English lexicalized compounds as regular lexical items and treat them basically in the same manner. Our present concern is primarily with nonlexicalized compounds, which often result from a speaker's or writer's employment of an

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[1]I wish to thank Ruth Berman from the Department of Linguistics at Tel Aviv University for her insightful comments on an earlier version of this paper. I also wish to thank Joel Walters and Ishai Tobin for their comments.

economy technique which produces an incidental compound in preference to a longer noun phrase, a preference often dictated by limitations of time and space. Thus, in an article concerned with the topic of brain surgery, the writer may prefer the creation of a compound like *precision brain surgery* to the longer and more cumbersome phrase of *very* precise surgery of/on the brain. Yet it seems clear that the native speaker-reader encountering this compound for the first time will have no difficulty interpreting its meaning. The ESOL reader, on the other hand, has difficulty both with the structural form of such compounds and with the selection of proper contextual clues in order to interpret their meaning appropriately. The present paper aims to focus on the particular strategies that the ESOL reader should employ in order to carry out the process of interpretation of nonlexicalized compounds in English more effectively.

1. Different analyses of English nominal compounds

Traditionally, nominal (lexicalized) compounds were studied from the point of view of the semantic content of the two nouns and their related stress features or grammatical relationships (Jespersen 1933:3). Generative grammarians, on the other hand, (Lees 1960 and 1970, Levi 1973) have tried to describe the productive process of compounding in terms of underlying structures, suggesting different ways of incorporating the characteristic features of such expressions and the constraints which apply to them into a grammar of the language. Lees' (1960) monumental work on English nominal compounds is an attempt to characterize the derivation of compounds from underlying grammatical relations such as predicate-noun (*girl-friend*), or subject-object (*steamboat*) or by periphrasis (*farm production*). Lees modified his analysis considerably in a revised version of his work (1970), proposing a specification of compounds in terms of their underlying case roles (agent, patient, instrument) with a limited class of generalized verbs which underlie this process.

Levi (1973) attempts new solutions within the same basic framework as suggested by Lees (1970), and after some revision (1975) she concludes that a considerable number of potentially semantic ambiguities of certain English compounds remain to be disambiguated through the pragmatic and semantic information given within the context in which they appear.

Downing (1977) approaches the problem of English compounds quite differently. She conducted a thorough investigation into the use and interpretation of nonlexicalized forms, a topic which is more specifically related to the present paper. While earlier studies had focused on the corpus of existing compound forms, Downing's study focuses on novel forms, some of which are interpretable only in the presence of considerable contextual support.[2]

[2]Some of the suggested compounds in Downing's study such as *fork-spoon* and *cow-pony* were rejected by most subjects participating in the study, while others like *stone furniture* or *hedge hatchet* were found easy to interpret.

Downing adopts a functional approach, investigating noun compounds from the point of view of both the speaker and the hearer. Her concern is with those relationships that the speaker might favor during the encoding process as well as those that are most interpretable to the hearer, thus hoping to arrive at a better understanding of what the nature of such relationships is and to what extent interpretation depends on contextual support. Some of her findings seem to us particularly significant in understanding the process of nonlexicalized compounding.

Perhaps the most important finding in Downing's study is the fact that there are no real constraints on the N + N process itself, and even temporary and fortuitous relationships are interpretable and acceptable to native speakers, when given in the appropriate context. She notes, however, that the speaker may be constrained by the need to establish permanent, nonpredictable relationships of name-worthy entities or categories. If the entity defined by the new compound is nameworthy, then it will have a wider range of situations in which it will be useful and interpretable.[3]

It seems to us that Downing's findings may in part explain the abundance of compounds found in scientific and technical writing, where the need to define new entities is often intense. Compounds often serve as names for such new entities, since a compound is useful in narrowing down a class of referents.[4] Once such a compound is created it will serve as the accepted name for an entity, soon becoming well recognized by those familiar with the particular field, and thus it receives pragmatic permanence and turns into a long-range category label.

We would like to suggest that novel compounds will function with differing degrees of lexicalization, depending on how widely they are used. Thus, in journalistic writing, for instance, space and time limitations might encourage the use of temporary, *ad hoc* compounds with relatively little chance of their becoming lexicalized (*wakefulness-rhythm* in the list given in the appendix) by contrast with the potential permanence of novel compounds reused in a given area of expertise *(open-heart surgery)*.

2. Compounding as a discourse technique

The written text is one type of manifestation of the communicative act and as such it can in some respects at least be analyzed analogously to conversational data. Although the sender and the receiver of the written message, in contrast to the oral exchange, are distant from one another in both time and space, there is a certain amount of shared knowledge that makes communi-

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[3]Some of the compounds mentioned by Downing, like *apple juice seat*, have no such name worthiness and will be extremely limited in the situations which allow for a suitable interpretation. These have a very low chance of ever becoming lexicalized even though they will be interpreted without difficulty in the specific situation where they are used.

[4]An example of how a class of referents can be narrowed down by adding a compound is the expression *precision brain surgery* (in the list given in the appendix – passage A) which narrows down *brain surgery* to a more identified type of surgery; *open-heart surgery* functions in the same way. In a more technical area we can see *service station pump* (passage B) as a narrowing down of the class of pumps.

cation possible. The maxims described by Grice (1975) as the *cooperative principle*[5] are significant in the written communicative act as well. The reader and the writer share general knowledge of the world, knowledge of the language in which the message is written, knowledge of the particular discourse style, and perhaps even knowledge of the field of interest. All of these allow a felicitous communicative act to take place.

While writers take full advantage of the knowledge which they share with the reader, they constantly create innovations in their text, confident that the readers will have no difficulty decoding the message. What makes it possible for writers, senders of written messages, to use such innovations constantly? Clark and Clark (1979) describe the ways in which the receiver of the message learns to interpret and disambiguate innovations in a text, noun compounds included: "In using an expression sincerely, the speaker intends the listener to come to a unique interpretation of what he has said – not only from the meanings of the words alone, but also on the assumption that the speaker has good grounds for thinking that the listener can come to that interpretation uniquely on the basis of what they mutually know" (p. 787).

Goffman's (1979) model of communication is relevant in part at least to a comparable model explaining written communication. We propose, specifically, an adaptation of Goffman's *preempt signals* to discourse devices which allow for topicalization, cohesiveness, repetition, reference, and expansion. Thus the efficient reader recognizes the novel compound created by the writer, as an attempt to narrow down and specify a class or subclass of referents. Many of those working in discourse analysis have claimed that technical and scientific writing makes use of considerably more noun compounding than other materials. In her study of compounding in engineering reading matter Bartolic (1978) claims that: "This structure is very frequently used in technical writing because it is shorter and more direct and therefore the information is conveyed in a more condensed form which has greater impact upon the reader." Olsen and Huckin (1979), who likewise study noun compounding in scientific and technical English, claim that noun compounds are more common in such reading matter than in nontechnical English. They found that statistically there is overwhelmingly more compounding in technical writing, particularly in electrical/computer engineering and in chemical engineering. Both these studies thus supply good evidence for the need for noun compounding in scientific and technical material.

On the basis of their investigation of numerous texts, Olsen and Huckin claim that noun compounds are often longer and more novel in English for scientific and technical (EST) writing than in nontechnical English. They cite examples such as *noise field effect transistors* and *weapons systems evaluation group* to prove the point. EST writing assumes that the readers have some

[5]The writer is informative to the extent to which s/he knows what the shared information is and s/he makes every effort to be clear and economical. Grice's maxims of relevance, optimum, quantity, quality, and manner of presentation in order to ensure effective communication are therefore fully applicable to the written message.

knowledge of the particular field of interest such as will help them interpret novel compounds, which might eventually become frozen terms associated with specific referents.[6]

Noun compounding in English, since it does provide more succinctness and clarity, also plays a significant discourse role in writing, where physical space is of great value and where readers must be given highly accurate information on the one hand, while not always being expected to make full use of the information given on the other. Journalistic writing and advertisements are good examples of areas in which physical constraints might be very significant. To illustrate this, consider some of the noun compounds found in the instruction leaflet accompanying a new refrigerator. The leaflet aims at providing the customer with the most important new features of the product, and therefore specifies such facts as: the *high-speed compressors* maintain *near-zero temperatures* and the refrigerator provides more *freezer storage space* and has a special *power saver switch*. The writer of the leaflet assumes, correctly, that the customer reading about these features will have no difficulty interpreting the message (provided s/he is a native speaker).

3. Compounds and the ESOL reader

The effective reader develops strategies based on three areas of competence: *pragmatic competence* – which relates to one's knowledge of the world, the particular topic presented in the reading text, and the field of interest to which the topic belongs; *linguistic competence* – knowledge of syntactic and semantic features of the language in which the material is written, knowledge which is indispensable for correct interpretation (Berman 1979); and *textual competence* – which implies knowledge of the rhetorical and discourse devices used by the writer in presenting the message in its written form.[7]

With regard to noun compounds, the reader must rely heavily on all three areas of competence, since often it may be impossible to interpret the compound correctly without a combination of all three factors. In the area of linguistic competence, the ESOL reader must be able to recognize the compound as a whole, which is the head noun and what relations hold between the head and its modifier(s). Moreover, compounding devices in the reader's L1 might, in some cases, constitute a source of interference in the process of identifying the elements of the compound. Semantically, for interpreting the compound, it may not be enough to know the meaning of the head noun. The reader needs thorough understanding of all the words that make up the compound to avoid an erroneous interpretation. Given that guessing from context is a very useful reading strategy for the interpretation of unfamiliar lexical items, it is

[6] Olsen and Huckin also maintain that noun compounds in EST materials are not always left branching and that sometimes the nonterminal nouns are not inflected. This is shown in the examples noted above.

[7] The terms *pragmatic*, *linguistic*, and *textual competence* are not identical to Halliday's ideational, interpersonal, and textual language functions. Halliday's ideational function has two subclasses – experiential and logic – the first of which relates to what we have called pragmatic while the second is part of the linguistic competence; both Halliday's interpersonal and textual functions are contained in our textual competence (Kress ed. 1976).

liable to be very misleading in the case of compounds, where it may yield inappropriate interpretations as often as not.

When a compound form is ambiguous, it can only be disambiguated by utilizing both clues provided in the context of the text and general pragmatic knowledge. The ESOL reader does not always take full advantage of these two types of competence: pragmatic and textual, and hence needs to be made aware of the potential role of both forms. According to Grice's *cooperative principle*, the writer assumes a certain amount of pragmatic knowledge on the part of the reader and specifies the textual information accordingly. A reader lacking relevant pragmatic knowledge, or who does not know how to employ this knowledge, might have difficulty with the text. Moreover, the writer supplies clues in the text to help the reader. It is therefore most important that the ESOL reader develop efficient strategies for employing both pragmatic and textual competence.

4. An experiment in compound interpretation

(a) Objectives

The study aimed to find out to what extent ESOL readers (in this case, speakers of Hebrew) need to fall back on each of the three types of competence described above, in interpreting noun compounds in English journalistic writing. In order to study the interpretation process of ESOL readers, some of the subjects were presented with noun compounds free of context (henceforth *isolated*) while another group was given the same compounds within the context of the article in which they originally appeared (henceforth *contexted*). The list of isolated compounds was also given to a group of English native speakers in order to ascertain whether and how the native and nonnative interpretations differed. All subjects participating in the study were asked to explain the meaning of the compound form, followed by a description of how they arrived at that meaning, which could be given in English or Hebrew, whichever the subject preferred.

Two major questions thus underlie the study: (i) whether, and if so, how, native and nonnative interpretations of the same list of noun compounds differ; and (ii) whether and how the interpretation strategies of nonnative speakers are affected by occurrence in context.

(b) Subjects

All the subjects participating in this study were college students in their twenties. The Hebrew-speaking subjects were all first year students, participating in the Tel Aviv University EFL reading courses. The study was carried out towards the end of the first semester, so that all the students had had some training in reading comprehension of scientific and other academic texts in English. This was significant since we were not testing their reading comprehension but rather the type of strategies they employ while reading expository writing matter.

(c) Instrument

The study used two reading selections – one from a daily newspaper and the other from a popular magazine – both on scientific/technical topics, yet intended for the general public. The passages were selected on the basis of the large number of noun compounds which they contained. Twenty-nine different compounds were chosen from both passages making up the list of compounds assigned for interpretation with and without context. (See the appendix for the full list.)

The list of compounds was given to subjects for interpretation according to the following grouping:

(1) A *control group* of 11 native speakers were given the total list of 29 *isolated* compounds.
(2) *Test Group I* – 14 Hebrew speakers were given 16 *isolated* compounds from passage A.
(3) *Test Group II* – 13 Hebrew speakers were given 14 *isolated* compounds from passage B.
(4) *Test Group III* – 14 Hebrew speakers were given 16 *contexted* compounds from passage A (the same list as was given to Group II).
(5) *Test Group IV* – 14 Hebrew speakers were given 13 *contexted* compounds from passage B (the same as for Group II).

The above grouping enabled us to first evaluate the interpretation strategies used by native speakers and then compare nonnative scores and strategies applied to compound interpretation, in the presence or absence of context, by comparing Test Group I with III and II with IV.

(d) Hypotheses

One: Native speakers' (control group) interpretation of noun-compounds will follow three patterns:

(1) Compounds with a high degree of lexicalization, whose meaning is based on a permanent relationship between adjuncts, do not depend on contextual support and will be interpreted consistently the same way by all native speakers, even when context free. The compounds in this group must be familiar to the reader; e.g. *earth-magnetism, sun power.*

(2) Some compounds are ambiguous and native speakers will require contextual support in order to disambiguate them (Levi 1973). Such contextual support may trigger both pragmatic and semantic information. When presented free of context, some native speakers will choose one meaning while others will choose another; e.g. *alcoholic driving, brain site.*

(3) Nonlexicalized compounds can be interpreted only when the appropriate context is given or when the relationship holding between adjuncts is completely transparent, e.g. *power source,* in which case the syntactic and semantic competence will be enough to lead to the proper interpretation. If, however, the noun compounds given free of context do not have a transparent

meaning, native speakers will have to rely on their linguistic competence only, and arrive at erroneous interpretations.

It should be possible to classify the 29 compounds used in this study into three groups, according to the interpretation patterns as evident in the native speakers' reactions.

Two: Nonnative speakers will rely heavily on their linguistic and pragmatic competence to interpret *isolated* noun-compounds.

(1) When linguistic proficiency is limited, the tendency of the nonnative speaker will be to use a transfer strategy from L1. In the case of Hebrew speakers, this may result in the wrong choice of the head-noun of the compound. The Hebrew speaker is most likely to focus on the modifying noun in a two-word compound or on any other nonterminal noun in a longer compound and view it as the head element since all Hebrew noun compounds, both lexicalized and incidental, are formed by a process termed smixut (adjacency) which places the head noun first, followed by the modifier.[8]

(2) When the nonnative speaker is lacking in semantic knowledge, s/he might use a strategy of relying only on the elements of the compound that are known to him/her and sum up the meaning of the familiar parts, so as to yield an erroneous interpretation.

(3) When linguistic knowledge is missing, the nonnative speaker may have to rely entirely on pragmatic knowledge, and since contextual clues are not available, wild pragmatic guessing might lead to inappropriate interpretations.

Three: Nonnative speakers will, in general, find it very difficult to interpret nonlexicalized compounds when presented free of context.

Four: Nonnative speakers will misinterpret unfamiliar lexicalized noun compounds, with or without context, since these are less dependent on context.

Five: Nonnative speakers will have less difficulty interpreting ambiguous compounds than native speakers, because they will usually not be aware of the ambiguity.

Six: When context is given, all three types of competence come into play and the L1 *transfer* strategy is reduced significantly. *Textual* competence is most significant in interpreting all compounds which require contextual support, specifically nonlexicalized compounds.

(e) Analysis of findings

Hypothesis One was verified. The native-speaking subjects' interpretations fell into three patterns, as follows:

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[8] In Hebrew NPs in general, the head noun is initial and precedes all modifiers (except for quantifiers); hence, noun compounds too, both lexicalized and incidental compounds, take the surface form of HEAD MODIFIER, e.g. "misxat sinayim" paste teeth, "bituax xayim" insurance life; for examples and an analysis see Berman (1978). A typical error might be *insurance life*.

(+) NCs given the same reading consistently across subjects in the control group. This set included items whose meaning was transparent from the sum of their parts -- e.g. *precision brain surgery* -- and also items that are relatively lexicalized, e.g. *earth magnetism*.

(×) NCs given variable readings since they are in fact ambiguous in isolation -- e.g. *air travel* could be 'travel by air' or 'air movement.'

(−) NCs given inappropriate readings since they require contextual support: e.g. *wakefulness rhythm*. On the basis of the native subjects' reaction the 29 NC were marked (×), (+), or (—). (See appendix.)

Hypothesis Two was generally verified for nonnative speakers in interpreting noun compounds without context, since they all employed linguistic or pragmatic competence or both. It is interesting to note here that subjects employed pragmatic competence more often than was expected, especially where the compound included lexical elements that were not fully comprehended: e.g. *earth magnetism* (79% out of 93% correct interpretations), *sun power* (75% out of 80% correct interpretations). On the other hand, subjects employed *linguistic* competence where the elements in the compound seemed semantically obvious and a sum of meaning was chosen as the best interpretation: e.g. *laboratory workers* (86% out of 86% correct interpretations).

(1) Language transfer was apparent in many cases. One of the subjects even marked all compounds with an arrow on the first element, taking that as the head noun. Some of the misinterpretations that resulted from the utilization of transfer were the following:

laboratory workers: (a) a *room* where they work
(b) the *laboratory* of the workers
calendar wrist watch: a *calendar* with a clock
alcoholic driving: *alcohol* which drives you to do strange things
engine alterations: a kind of an *engine*

(2) When the subjects did not know the meaning of all the elements in the compounds, they produced a sum of meaning of those elements which they knew, as was anticipated by Hypothesis Two:

service station pump (+): a *station* where you can get gasoline
time zone effects (+): the *influence* of time on a person

(3) Pragmatic knowledge was often employed in guessing at the meaning of a compound where linguistic competence was not helpful enough. Thus subjects came up with interesting misinterpretations:

dark-light cycle: (a) lightening; (b) the light of a bicycle
body clock: the heart (three subjects suggested this interpretation)

Other compounds were, by contrast, interpreted correctly by using this strategy. They included: *air travel, earth magnetism, sun power*.

Hypothesis Three was partially verified; nonnative speakers could not interpret nonlexicalized compounds given in isolation unless pragmatic knowledge helped explain the term.

(−) Context	Native Score	Nonnative Score	
body clock (−)	64%	28%	
dark-light cycle (−)	82	43	(pragmatic knowledge)
wakefulness rhythm (−)	45	0	
biological clock (−)	73	71	(pragmatic knowledge)

Hypothesis Four was verified; some of the compounds did not receive much better interpretation in context than in isolation.

	(−) context	(+) context	
peak efficiency	7%	7%	not context dependent
sugar distilleries	10	21	not context dependent
precision brain surgery	14	21	difficult structurally
road taxes	65	64	pragmatic competence

Hypothesis Five was partially verified; some ambiguous compounds were interpreted by nonnatives without difficulty even when given in isolation since they did not recognize the ambiguity, and therefore had *less* of an interpretation problem.

	Native Score	Nonnative Score
night activity	55%	86%
laboratory workers	73	86
air travel	91	93
alcoholic driving	55	80

Hypothesis Six was generally verified but deserves a number of qualifications:

(1) L1 transfer strategy was completely eliminated once context was made available.

(2) *Textual competence* was very significant across all groups of NC, (lexicalized, ambiguous, nonlexicalized) if they were thematically connected to the topic discussed in the passage. In many cases where L1 transfer strategy had been employed for *isolated* compounds, *textual* competence was significant in leading to much higher scores for the comparable *contexted* compounds. This was particularly true for passage B which dealt with driving with alcohol fuel, as a concentrated theme.

	(−) context	(+) context
engine alterations	5%	58%
gasoline fumes	10	86
service station pump	5	86
petroleum imports	45	71
gas-powered cars	55	71

(3) Textual competence increased considerably the score of correct interpretation for all nonlexicalized compounds marked (−), but more significantly those that had thematic support in the passage.

	(−) context	(+) context
body clock	28%	93%
dark-light cycle	43	64
wakefulness rhythm	0	43
biological clock	71	79[9]

(f) Conclusions

The experiment described here shows very clearly that the ESOL receiver makes use of one or more of the three types of competence: *linguistic, textual, pragmatic* as the particular case of interpretation calls for; that is, the good ESOL reader knows how to adjust his/her strategies to the particular reading

[9] The compound *biological clock* was interpreted correctly by many nonnative subjects on the basis of pragmatic knowledge. The term exists in Hebrew "sapon biologi"

matter at hand. Thus, both natives and nonnatives will-sum up the meaning of the elements in a compound that seems to work best, and will use structural competence as the basic underlying technique for NC interpretation.

The nonnative speaker will minimize L1 transfer once context is available and it is possible to employ textual, or at least pragmatic competence related to the general theme.

5. Guidelines for the ESOL reader

A number of effective strategies for noun-compound interpretation emerge from the findings of the study and could be incorporated as helpful guidelines in an ESOL reading course, provided the learner is an active participant in the learning process and shares responsibility for success.

(a) In order to cope with the items or forms which you may not be familiar with, first of all be sure to have a general understanding of the passage as a whole. Once you have this general grasp, you can make good use of the things you know about the world and/or the topic discussed in the text to interpret unfamiliar material and take full advantage of the clues and information provided.

(b) English often uses strings of nouns one after the other when the whole group really refers to one entity or one process. It is important for you to try and learn to recognize such a group. Do not try to understand each word separately but look at the whole entity.

(c) Once you have established that a group of words belongs together as a compound, it is usually safe to think of the *last* element in the group as the head. There may be other elements that are significant in understanding the concept, but usually the last one is the most important.

Thus, for instance, *air pressure pumps* are a special kind of *pump*, but *air water pressure* is a kind of *pressure* and *pressure pump air* is a kind of *air*.

(d) You must really have a good understanding of each word in the compound in order to understand the whole. If there are words in the compound whose meaning you don't know, it might help to consult a dictionary.

(e) When you know the meaning of all the individual words in the compounds, but you are not sure of the total meaning, marshall all your knowledge about the text and its topic as well as what is most likely an interpretation in the real world that sounds feasible.

APPENDIX A

Scores and Strategies Employed in Interpreting Noun-Compounds in the Absence of Context

Nominal Compound	Native score*	Non-native score	Not in Context: Linguistic Strategy	Not in Context: Pragmatic Strategy	Not in Context: Transfer Strategy
Passage A	n=11	n=14			(−)
body-clock (−)	64	28	21	7	
brain-site (×)	84	7		7	
precision brain surgery (+)	100	14		14	
night activity (×)	55	86	86		
earth magnetism (+)	100	93	14	79	
calendar wrist watch (+)	100	14		14	21
household electric clock (+)	100	50	50		
laboratory workers (+)	73	86	86		14
dark-light cycle (−)	82	43		43	
wakefulness rhythm (−)	45	0			
biological clock (+)	73	71		71	
peak efficiency (+)	100	7	7		
time zone effects (+)	100	0			
air travel (×)	91	93	93		
pulse rate (+)	100	29		29	
stomach contraction (+)	100	29		29	21
Passage B	n=11	n=20			
alcoholic driving (×)	55	80	80		5
sun power (×)	100	80	5	75	
power source (+)	100	65	65	5	
engine alterations (+)	100	5	5		20
standard model (+)	100	80	10	70	10
gasoline fumes (+)	100	10	5	5	20
inflation rates (+)	100	40		40	5
sugar distilleries (+)	91	10	5	5	
service station pump (+)	100	5		5	30
petroleum imports (+)	100	45	20	25	
alcohol power (×)	64	50	20	30	
road taxes (+)	100	65	10	55	
gas-powered cars (+)	100	55	10	45	

*scores in %.

(−) not interpretable without context
(×) ambiguous interpretation
(+) interpretable from syntactic-semantic features.

APPENDIX B

Scores and Strategies Employed in Interpreting Noun Compounds When Given in Context (Nonnative Speakers)

Nominal Compounds	Non-Native Score	In Context: Linguistic Strategy	In Context: Pragmatic Strategy	In Context: Textual Clues
Passage A	n = 14			
body-clock (−)	93			93
brain-site (×)	29			29
precision brain surgery (+)	21			21
night activity (×)	100	93		7
earth magnetism (+)	86	43		43
calendar wristwatch (+)	21	7		14
household electric clock (+)	71	71		
laboratory workers (×)	86	86		
dark-light cycle (−)	64	7	14	43
wakefulness rhythm (−)	43			43
biological clock (−)	79			79
peak efficiency (+)	7	7		
time zone effects (+)	43			43
air travel (×)	71	71		
pulse rate (+)	50		29	21
stomach contraction (+)	50		50	

*There were no cases of transfer strategy with the compounds in context.

Passage B	n = 14			
alcoholic driving (×)	100			100
sun power (+)	100	28	58	14
power source (+)	71	21	43	7
engine alterations (+)	58			58
standard model (+)	79		79	
gasoline fumes (+)	86	7	7	72
inflation rates (+)	93		64	29
sugar distilleries (+)	21			21
service station pump (+)	86			86
petroleum imports (+)	71		7	64
alcohol power (×)	64		7	64
road taxes (+)	64		43	21
gas powered cars (+)	79	14	21	44

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ED223094

Language, Personality, and Culture, or the Whorfian Hypothesis Revisited[1]

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Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas

Chemical engineer by training, insurance executive by profession, linguist and amateur philosopher by avocation, Benjamin Lee Whorf was a remarkable man by any account. An accomplished student of many languages, most notably a number of Indian tongues, Whorf's linguistic gifts might never have fully flowered—and this is the view of his informal biographer, John B. Carroll—had he not met Edward Sapir in 1931. It was partly a result of this association that the now famous hypothesis, bearing both their names, emerged. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, or rather *the principle of linguistic relativity*, as rendered by Carroll reads as follows: "the structure of a human being's language influences the manner in which he understands reality and *behaves* (emphasis mine) with respect to it". This was a remarkably bold and sweeping statement, that bridged distant shores of linguistics, psychology and philosophy, and foreshadowed the emergence of discrete disciplines such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and ethnolinguistics.

A bold statement of great intuitive appeal, it has, possibly, enormous consequences in terms of the way we view ourselves and others. The principle of linguistic relativity, drawn to its logical conclusion, can have significant political consequences as well, by allowing for instance, the ranking of languages (and the peoples speaking them) in terms of the richness or flexibility of their coding and information processing systems.

As original a thinker as Whorf was, the ideas subsumed under the rubric of linguistic relativity had been around for a long time before him. I need only to cite a statement culled from classical Hebrew literature, dating back to the second century. According to this differential view of languages, Latin is best suited for war, Greek for poetry, Persian for grief, and Hebrew, of course, for speech. It is left to our imagination what the consequences of growing up, let's say, in Greek might be, as opposed to having Persian as one's mother tongue.

But we don't have to go that far back for a differential or relativistic view of languages. Around the time that Whorf himself was writing, and probably unbeknownst to him, a Californian scholar, D.D. Lee, writing in a philosophical journal, suggested that "it has been said that a language will delineate and *limit* (emphasis mine) the logical concepts of the individual who speaks it"—an even more strongly worded statement than Whorf's "principle."

It might be useful to quote Lee's conclusion of her study of Wintu. Based on an analysis of this Indian language, Lee comes to the conclusion that "the Wintu has a small sphere wherein he can choose and do, can feel and think

[1]Paper presented at the Colloquium on Affective States in Second Language Acquisition at the 15th Annual TESOL Convention on March 4, 1981, in Detroit, Michigan.

and make decisions. Cutting through this and *circumscribing* (emphasis mine) it is the world of natural necessity wherein all things that are potential and probable are also inevitable, whereas existence is unknowable and ineffable." Does that mean that the Wintu experience the world the way they do, that is to say differently from English speakers, *because* of the structure (i.e. coding) particular to their language? Is the Wintu *personality* an expression, a consequence of the language? Or, conversely, does the language only *reflect* the particular way in which the Wintu have organized the world? Pliant instrument that language is, is it only responding to the needs represented by the culture? And in either case does a Wintu child grow up experiencing the world in ways that are significantly and *permanently* different from those of an English-speaking child? These are intriguing questions of potentially great significance.

The remarkable thing about all these ideas is that while they have apparently been floating around for a long time, they have remained in the realm of assertions and speculation, producing little noticeable effort in the way of empirical verification.

Perhaps it is a commentary on the state of the field that Roger Brown, writing in 1954, could sum up the situation by suggesting that "the Whorf thesis on the relationship between language and thought is found to involve the following two propositions: (1) different linguistic communities perceive and conceive reality in different ways; (2) the language spoken in a community helps to shape the cognitive structure of the individuals speaking that language. The evidence for the first proposition derives from a comparison of the lexical and structural characteristics of various languages. The linguistic comparisons alone do not establish the proposition. They need to be complemented by psychological data. The second proposition is not directly supported by any data. . . It is. . .possible that the lexical structure of the speech he hears guides the infant in categorizing his environment. These matters require empirical exploration". Brown's position is echoed by Joshua Fishman, in whose view analysis at the purely linguistic level can provide us with interesting illustrations, but adds only little to our understanding of higher levels because linguistic differences are not related at this level of analysis to nonlinguistic behavior. The level of analysis becomes more complex and crucial to the testing of the hypothesis when linguistic *and* nonlinguistic behaviors are correlated.

We have to consider a number of intersecting parameters, each in turn influencing the other. A meaningful study of the influence of language on the speaker must be interactional in scope and dynamic in conception. The parameters are: *linguistic structures*, separated into lexical and idiomatic, morphological and acoustic; *cultural*, i.e. commonalities between the collective of speakers of the language; *developmental*, i.e. transitional aspects, and finally *personality*, i.e. the final, permanent templates of behavior.

Von Humboldt offered almost 150 years ago the following most eloquent words: "For in language the individualization within general conformity is so marvelous that we may state with equal correctness that the entire human race possesses but a single language and each human possesses a particular one."

It has been my basic view all along that language is a unique phenomenon in the sense that it is both intensely personal, even idiosyncratic in its physical representation, and at the same time species-specific. As such, it serves as a bridge between the individual and the species, offering a rare opportunity to study one and extrapolate to the other. Language and speech incorporate in a unique blend intra and interpersonal parameters, and cognitive and affective aspects of information processing, allowing a view of the total person in a manifestation that lends itself to scientific inquiry. In other words, a great deal of information rides on language *behavior*, perhaps analogous to the way blood is the carrier of vast amounts of information about bodily function.

It has been my conviction that the long overdue, systematic inquiry into the principle of linguistic and cultural relativity must proceed along such lines, bearing in mind at all times that the study of language *perforce* means the study of language behavior. The reference to *language behavior* as something apparently *different* from language may sound somewhat cryptic and may require elaboration. *Language*, of course, is the vehicle for cognitive processes, for information processing which includes the formulation, the articulation and, on some level, the conceptualization of affective experiences as well, thus creating a *three-channel feedback loop* between affect, cognition, and available linguistic structures, each channel influencing, shaping, modifying, and helping to fix the other.

But beyond that, *speech*--speaking a native language--is a powerful dimension of self-representation; it is one of the vital *rings* of identity, separating us from others, affirming our uniqueness, yet confirming our membership in the several larger rings of identity: of family, of region, of nation.

It is against this background that first *and* second language behavior interact; it is against this background that the idea of linguistic relativity has to be conceptualized as a two-way street: linguistic structures influencing personality development and the emergence of stable personality parameters, and personality parameters in turn impinging on language behavior.

Simply stated, if the structure of the native language has an effect on the way I perceive and interpret the world around me, then confrontation with a second language and *its* structure may present a conflict with, and a challenge to the native language, by offering alternate ways of processing information. This confrontation may challenge the *exclusivity* of the way my native language conceptualizes and identifies events and processes in me and around me. This confrontation and challenge may thus have significant consequences, in intellectual and emotional terms, for the student of foreign languages.

Let me linger at this point a while longer, especially since I intend to return to it in the last section of this paper. The capacity to tolerate ambiguities and uncertainties is the mark of a certain psychological strength, essential to the understanding of the other. The capacity to entertain an alternate hypothesis about any proposition is the mark of the successful blend of cognitive and affective templates that can lead to new discoveries. As a matter of fact, Western science, as opposed to religion, cannot be imagined without a central

role for the alternate hypothesis. Foreign language, I submit, is the most readily available (and perhaps the least threatening) vehicle for demonstrating and legitimizing the alternate hypothesis.

Let me illustrate this point by using examples from languages that I am familiar with. If a native speaker of English wants to describe the chromatic consequences of a barroom brawl, the naturally available linguistic form will be "black and blue". This same speaker, however, in studying Hungarian will discover that "blue and green" is the way Hungarians experience the same event. Our English speaker will have been confronted with an alternate way of processing the same event, perhaps even putting the two systems (Hungarian and English) on equal footing. Or, for example, in many European languages the gender of the possessive pronoun will be determined by the gender of the object, thus 'mon pere,' 'ma mere,' conceptualizing the relationship in a way that focuses on the object. Hebrew and English, on the other hand, focus on the possessor, 'his father,' 'his mother,' 'aba shelo,' 'ima shelo,' offering an alternate way of viewing relationships.

In sum, it is my view that a cross-cultural study of bilingual behavior may well be the most productive way to elucidate the ideas inherent in the so-called Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. It is in this spirit that our work has proceeded over the last several years. As stated, the question was: how will language affect personality development and how will personality development, in turn, affect language behavior? We approached this task on two fronts: by investigating a set of second language behaviors and, independently of that, a set of first language behaviors.

Of all aspects of second language behavior, pronunciation seems to be the most baffling. While it is possible, for most learners, to assimilate a new vocabulary and, in an ascending order of difficulty, even the proper use of metaphors, the gender system, and the tense system particular to a foreign language, most adult learners can rarely, if ever, assimilate native-like pronunciation. They may, as in the case of learners of English, master the stress rules (so particular to the language), yet will be apparently unable "to walk the extra mile" and produce native-like sounds.

We view pronunciation as the core of what I have termed *language ego*, and as the most critical contribution of language ego to self-representation. If, as I believe, native language is one of the critical rings of identity, pronunciation, in turn, is the inner lining of the language ring, or language ego, as I prefer to call it.

Pronunciation, as noted above, unlike other aspects of language learning, seems to have a natural history all its own. While young children (up to 9-12 years of age) learn foreign languages with relative ease, around puberty their pronunciation skills seem to be dramatically reduced, although general language learning capability, such as lexical and grammatical skills, are not lost. Beyond this period, as noted before, it is virtually impossible to acquire native-like pronunciation in a foreign language. Turning this around, one might say that beyond a certain point in personality development, at the apparent culmination of a critical phase, it becomes practically impossible to lose, to give up, even temporarily, one of the most salient identifying char-

acteristics of any human being, a means by which we identify ourselves, and are identified by others: *the way we sound*.

Yet, there are real individual differences in the degree to which learners can approximate native-like pronunciation. In our several publications we have suggested that the individual differences in the quality of pronunciation are due to differences in the capacity of the individual to step outside of himself, to give up temporarily an important ring of his identity, a component of his self-representation, *and* assume another, and put himself, as it were, in the linguistic shoes of the other. Moreover, we have developed the argument that this capacity to step outside one's shoes can be enhanced under certain conditions. In the technical language we have developed, the proposition is as follows: (a) individual differences in the approximation of native-like pronunciation will be related to differences in the permeability of language ego boundaries, and (b) permeability of language ego boundaries, as expressed in enhanced pronunciation performance, can be experimentally manipulated.

Over the years, we have addressed this question in a variety of ways, using different experimental procedures, first to establish a link between pronunciation and the postulated psychological construct, then to effect changes in pronunciation based on theoretical expectations, and finally to demonstrate the constancy of the psychological construct, thus enhancing its robustness.

Our various pronunciation studies (with the exception of the last one demonstrating that there is a general pronunciation capability) have been published and widely discussed in the professional literature as well as in the media; I could add little new information by reviewing them. Let me just summarize our conclusions by restating that our research has led us to believe that variations in a personality template, the consequence of individual differences either in the developmental process or the genetic make-up, will have a demonstrable effect on an all-important facet of second-language behavior. These language behaviors can be predicted and can be experimentally manipulated. In sum, there is no question but that personality has an enduring effect on second language behavior.

While our second language work may have enjoyed (?!) a measure of notoriety, our native language research (some of it unpublished) may be even more relevant to the questions we are addressing here. In comparing languages in terms of the use they make of gender markers one is struck by several phenomena. Languages vary widely in gender prominence. Gender marking in many languages applies only to nominal categories, such as pronouns and adjectives. In other languages gender-marking applies also to verbs, and may, in certain cases, be directly related to the gender of the human participant in the speech situation. There are yet other languages, such as the Finno-Ugrian group, in which gender plays practically no grammatical role at all. Thus languages differ not only in the extent to which they employ grammatical gender — manifested in pronominal and sometimes verb agreement in the third person — but also in the extent to which they oblige their speakers to take note of the sex of the participants in a speech event.

We suggested that if the structure of language has an effect on the way we experience and process the world around us, then the differences in "gender-

loading" as we came to call it might provide a productive arena for inquiry. Those of us who grew up referring to a friend's mother as "*his* mother" might stumble over "*sa* mere," and, conversely, if one grew up saying "*son* pere," he might have occasional difficulty with "*her* father."

On a more systematic level, in the first of our so-called gender studies, we set out to explore what effect sex-determined grammatical gender-loading in the native language has on the development of gender identity. One would expect the exposure to gender differentiation in language to create an awareness of gender differences in the objects of language, especially the self and other humans. Thus the child's awareness of gender-loading and its uses becomes a part of the materials that go into his construction of the social world and his own place in that world. The empirical question we asked was: will there be a relationship between the *amount* of linguistic emphasis on sex-determined gender and the *average age* of attaining gender identity in children, in a specific linguistic environment?

To answer this question, three groups of children between the ages of 16 and 42 months, reared in three different language environments, were tested on a measure constructed for this purpose, the Michigan Gender Identity Test (MIGIT). Eighty-nine toddlers in Israel, 72 in Finland, and 101 in the United States constituted the research samples. All children came from monolingual families, Hebrew, Finnish, and English, respectively. In terms of gender-loading, Hebrew can be said to have the maximum, English minimal, Finnish zero.

The findings indicate a direct relationship between gender-loading in the language and gender identity attainment. The Hebrew speaking sample of children showed the highest (earliest) level of gender identity attainment, while the Finnish speaking group showed the lowest (latest) level. It appears that the Israeli children have a significant, albeit *temporary*, advantage over their American and Finnish counterparts in the *timing* of gender identity development. What we may see then is a difference in the growth curve, apparently attributable to differences in the native language. The results suggest a possible confirmation of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis—but more about that later.

The effect found could be made more robust, the explanatory principle more powerful, if some other linguistic structure could be shown to have a similar impact on some other developmental template.

One of the more difficult developmental tasks children have to master is a correct perception of times past, present, and future. It is a slow process, and children under seven apparently cannot yet experience, conceptualize, and certainly not articulate, sequential order of events. They have difficulty in what I call properly "segmenting" the past.

Languages differ in the way they provide structures for "segmenting the past". English, like Spanish and most Indo-European languages, has a number of grammatical forms to indicate different moments in the nonpresent, (in the past) as they relate sequentially to one another. This segmenting can be accomplished with great ease, and without any paraphrastic effort, because of the ready availability of these grammatical forms, as in this example: "For

some time now my sister *has been telling* me that there *was* this man she *had known* in her youth who *has* now *returned* to town and whom she *was going* to marry." The five distinct grammatical structures used in this sentence to identify discrete moments in the past are simply not available in languages like Hungarian or Hebrew. Both these languages, possibly along with others, have only one grammatical form to mark the past. Surely, speakers of these languages by the time they have reached linguistic maturity will have compensated for these structural deficiencies by developing paraphrastic strategies; however, it is conceivable that the availability of and exposure to a multiplicity of forms ordering past events in a proper sequence and segmenting them with precision might have an effect on the growth curve, and accelerate the development of time perception in children. As stated earlier, if this were so, the findings emerging from our gender study would represent a more powerful explanatory principle.

Measuring time perception, let alone segmentation of the past, in children is a ticklish problem. Those of you who are familiar with Piagetian studies on time perception are also aware, no doubt, of the criticisms leveled against those studies. The most powerful argument against them, in my judgment, is the failure to replicate the experiments in non-French language environments. Be that as it may, in order to examine our proposition we had to measure in some reliable and valid way the ability of children to segment the past in an appropriate sequential order.

One of my associates, Art Herold, a psychology graduate student, had the following idea. One of the subtests of the well-known Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) is the so-called Picture Arrangement Test. In this test, subjects are shown several single pictures, and told that properly arranged these will yield a story. There is only one possible way to arrange the pictures and get a coherent story. If the prevalence of past tense forms in the native language has an effect on the development of time perception, American children should show a performance superior to that of their Israeli counterparts. The WISC is widely used in Israel, but more importantly its Hebrew version has been standardized and the norms have been published. Thus we can compare an American data base (based on thousands of subjects) with an Israeli data base established in the same manner. The findings are potentially of great consequence.

While we find that Israeli children and American children are pretty similar in their performance on a variety of subtests, they differ markedly on Picture Arrangement. And they do so in a peculiar manner. There is a big difference in favor of the Americans between the ages of 6 to 16. Interestingly, this difference increases between the ages of 6 to 16 for children of modest intellectual endowment, but remains constant for the bright ones, with one notable and important exception. Between the ages of 7½ and 11, that age during which time perception is acquired and solidified, the brighter Israeli children show a decrease in their ability to perform this function relative to Americans. That is, the brighter American children between 7½ and 11 actually exhibit an additional advantage over the Israelis. We assume that the deficit with which Israeli children operate at this point is related to the relative

absence of language forms, in Hebrew, to segment the past. It is significant that this additional decrease in scores for Israeli children occurs at that very age, 7½ to 11, where time perception is supposedly acquired. After age 11, Israeli children return to their pre-seven year old level of deficit (that is, relative to the Americans) presumably because at this age the paraphrastic strategies offered by Hebrew allow for the correction. The important thing is that between 7½ and 11 the relative absence of language structures in Hebrew for segmenting the past make it more difficult for Israeli children than for Americans to perceive events in proper time sequence.

This means certain things and *may* mean certain others. It means (provided that Picture Arrangement is accepted as a measure of segmenting the past) that a multiplicity of forms in the native language ordering past events in a proper sequence, and segmenting them with precision, will have an effect on portions of the growth curve and accelerate the development of time perception in children—thus answering in the affirmative our question, and providing additional support for the findings of our gender study. But beyond that, there is the curious phenomenon of persistent differences across all ages, suggesting that powerful cultural and nonlinguistic effects are contributing to a difference in Israeli and American scores from 6 to 16. However, if our hypothesis that linguistic features contribute to a temporary decline in performance for Israeli children between 7½ and 11 is correct, then it is possible that this linguistic effect is indeed long-lasting and more robust but is marked by other cultural factors after the age of 11. A test more sensitive to the contribution of linguistic effects would have to be designed to test this hypothesis.

In any event, at a minimum the Picture Arrangement data can be interpreted to indicate that linguistic structures particular to the native language may have a temporary effect on cognitive development. Our gender study shows clearly that, in *that context*, the effect is also temporary. What additional evidence can we find in favor of this proposition?

It is commonly held by some psychologists (certainly by psychoanalysts) that certain words have a symbolic or connotative meaning, over and beyond their denotative value. More specifically, there are some objects (and words denoting them) that are perceived as masculine, and others that are perceived as feminine. It is possible, in the light of the evidence already accumulated, that gender-loading in one's native language will influence the way in which male or female characteristics, or symbolic values, are ascribed to essentially asexual objects. If this is the case, then we can point to a permanent and stable effect linguistic structures have on personality. Conversely, if no such effect is found, then the interpretation emerging from our gender study—to wit, that the effect is temporary—is enhanced.

Using a measure developed along the lines of the Semantic Differential Test, we found that Israeli college students (you will recall that Hebrew has maximum gender loading) assigned sexual connotation to the test words in a manner identical to American students. (English, as noted, has minimum gender loading.) Moreover, we also found that the apparent primacy of connotative meaning over grammatical form is established as early as five years of age, suggesting that whatever effect native language structures may have on

cognitive structures is "outgrown" fairly early in life and is replaced by a more powerful influence. The shared human experience, at least within the context of the same civilization, seems to be more powerful than the particular constraints imposed by the structure of the native language.

What emerges from the foregoing is a very complex pattern of interaction between personality and language. The sages of ancient Israel, D.D. Lee of California, and Benjamin Lee Whorf of Massachusetts were both right and wrong. Right in claiming an influence for language on behavior, and wrong in making this claim undifferentiated, all pervasive, permanent, and absolute. Our evidence would suggest that the influence of language on personality development is *not* an all or nothing proposition. This influence has a natural history of its own, waxing and waning, depending on age and the *affected cognitive structures*. Native language makes a difference at certain points of individual development, temporary for the most part, but perhaps permanent in certain instances for certain subpopulations. This last observation should not to be taken though to suggest that speakers of certain languages are inevitably and uniformly condemned to a fate of intellectual and emotional inferiority.

Moreover, as our work in second language acquisiton shows, personality variables, at least in adults, have a powerful and enduring effect on language behavior. It is reasonable to assume that all people are born with the same cognitive equipment, and that that equipment is flexible enough under most circumstances to make use of whatever linguistic structures are available for conceptualizing and articulating a person's experiential world. Wonderful indeed is the inventiveness of the human mind, and our paraphrastic and circumlocutory skills attest to that.

In summary, two conclusions seem to emerge from our studies:

a. within the context of the same civilization, language seems to have mostly an accelerating effect on the growth process, rarely creating a permanent difference.
b. the influence of personality on language behavior is more pervasive and more enduring than the influence of language on personality.

So, at least in terms of our evidence, the truth is, as so often in science, in the middle. Whorf's brilliant insight clearly illuminated something that is real, but the extravagant claims made in the name of his "principle" do not stand up in the cold daylight of empirical verification, demonstrating once again that in science truth is always temporary, never accounting for more than a portion of the variance.

Part 4

Bilingual Education

ED225095

Language Use in Bilingual Classrooms: Two Case Studies[1]

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It would be hard to imagine a more language-saturated environment than a bilingual classroom, where interaction occurs in several language varieties, where instruction is conducted (to a greater or lesser degree) in two or more languages, and where far-reaching educational decisions are based on continuous assessments of children's language development. Ironically, despite the centrality of language-related issues in establishing a rationale for bilingual education, as well as in implementing bilingual programs, very little is known about the nature of language interaction in bilingual classrooms. The bulk of research conducted in the area of bilingual education over the past decade has followed an evaluation approach, focusing primarily on instructional outcomes of bilingual programs, and only secondarily on the teaching/learning process itself. Although this product-oriented approach to research has been necessary due to the highly politicized context within which bilingual/bicultural programs operate in this country, it is only through process-oriented research that classroom teachers can learn more about what is taking place in their classrooms, and about what types of practices may be more effective in achieving specific aims.

The two studies reported in this article follow the latter approach. They are similar in one important respect – they both focus on language use patterns in bilingual classrooms. Despite this similarity in terms of overall focus, the two studies are different in important ways: whereas the first study examines teacher talk in a high school classroom and is based on a very limited data base, the second study examines student talk at the primary level and is based on an extensive corpus of data. The research framework for these two studies is provided by a loosely defined area of inquiry commonly referred to as "classroom language research." A brief rationale for approaching classroom-based issues in bicultural-bilingual education from this framework follows.

1. Why study classroom language?

Investigations in the area of classroom language have an established tradition in educational research (Barnes et al 1971, Bellack et al 1966, Mehan 1979, Rosen and Rosen 1973, Sinclair and Coulthard 1975). In recent years, studies focusing on language use in bilingual classrooms have begun to appear (Bruck and Shultz 1977, Bruck et al 1979, Genishi 1979, Legarreta 1979, Shultz 1975, Townsend and Zamora 1975).

[1]I wish to thank Profesors Robert Politzer and Arnulfo Ramiorez for their assistance in carrying out this research.

A variety of reasons are commonly cited for focusing on classroom language. First, as stated at the outset, language is pervasive in classrooms. Students deal with language during most of the school day, and most learning tasks centrally involve language in one form or another.

Secondly, classroom language appears to play an important role in the development of the thinking process, leading to the proposition that one way of looking at cognitive development in children is through an examination of certain types of classroom language.

A third reason for looking at classroom language is that examining the dialogue between teachers and students may give us some insights into how knowledge is defined and transmitted in the classroom. This issue addresses concerns that are at the heart of bicultural education. What, after all, constitutes valid knowledge? Is this not, to some extent, culturally determined? This question can be addressed by looking at which student answers are accepted, and which ones rejected. And how is knowledge transmitted? Is it primarily through the oral channel or is it through the written channel? Is the knowledge that is transmitted that which the teacher intends to transmit? If not, why not? Is there a mismatch between the teaching style of the instructor and the students' learning style that affects in some way the transmission process? These are the types of questions, related to what schools are supposed to do (i.e., transmit knowledge), that can be addressed through an examination of classroom language.

A fourth set of issues that can be addressed through classroom language research involves looking at the sociolinguistic barriers that exist between some students and the educational system. This is directly related to the central concerns of bilingual education, because it looks at the incompatibility between children's home language and the language of the school. Beyond that, another related issue involves looking at teachers' attitudes towards language varieties other than the standard, and how these attitudes may affect student language use and, ultimately, their language development.

Finally, classroom language research enables us to examine language functions—i.e., the types of purposes to which language is put in the classroom. This, in turn, may lead to revelations as to the "hidden agenda" of the classroom, and to insights which would otherwise not be available. This is a fascinating topic, but it becomes particularly fascinating when examined in the context of two classroom languages. In this instance, questions related to the functional allocation of the two languages in that particular context can be asked: for example, what types of purposes is language X being used for, and what types of purposes is language Y being used for in the classroom? Is it possible that language Y is being relegated to a subordinate role in the classroom, and if so, what are the consequences? This fifth orientation provides the framework for the first study reported on below.

In summary: it has been argued, first of all, that there is a need for classroom-based process studies in bilingual education; and secondly, a series of arguments have been presented as to why classroom language may provide a fruitful framework for approaching this research. The remainder of this

article reports on two studies conducted over the past three years that focus on some of the issues raised above.

2. Case Study #1: Functional Allocation of Teacher Talk[1]

Most bilingual programs striving for dual language development define teacher language use goals in terms of "balanced" use of the two languages in the classroom. Operationally, this is typically interpreted as meaning an "equal amount" of language X and language Y in the classroom. Rarely is there an effort to make qualitative distinctions addressing the issue of functional allocation; yet, based on what we know about language use in multilingual settings, it would not be unusual or surprising to find the two languages being assigned, quite unintentionally, to separate functions within the classroom context.

This study examined the functional allocation of teacher talk in a twelfth grade Civics class. The teacher was a young Chicano, skillful in following a concurrent approach (whereby Spanish and English were used interchangeably), and highly successful in working with students who other teachers had had difficulty with. The class had seventeen students with a wide range of language characteristics: five were heavily English dominant, three were Spanish monolinguals, and nine were bilingual to varying degrees. The high school, located in a large city in northern California, was predominantly Mexican American. The primary research question was: to what extent are the two languages, English and Spanish, used on an equal basis to fulfill the major instructional functions of the classroom?

One 50-minute lesson was audio-recorded and transcribed, and then teacher utterances from the lesson were coded with respect to pedagogical function. The coding system used, summarized in Table 1, is based on Sinclair and Coulthard's acts, and includes within it eight functions. Results of the functional analysis are summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 1

Description of the Acts Used in Coding

1. Informative:	Primary function is to provide information.
2. Elicitation:	Function is to request a linguistic response.
3. Directive:	Function is to request a non-linguistic response (used to perform regulatory function).
4. Metastatement:	Function is to "help the students to see the structure of the lesson. . .to help them understand the purpose of the subsequent exchange, and see where they are going" (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, p. 43). (Also includes sum-

[1]This study is repeated in greater detail in *CABE Research Journal* 2, 2:11-26.

	maries and reviews, which function to help students see where they have been in the lesson.)
5. Expressives:	In its positive vein, function to express solidarity, emotion, or a show of warmth and acceptance. In negative vein, function to show disagreement, tension, or outright hostility.
6. Humor-Expressive:	A subcategory of expressives. Includes utterances which function primarily to express humor, or to "kid", and not to provide information. (Can serve to ensure social maintenance, to deal with feelings, or to display sympathy.)
7. Follow-up:	Function to acknowledge that the teacher has heard what the student has said. (Also includes evaluations, which function to comment on the quality of a reply.)
8. Reply:	Function to provide the appropriate linguistic response defined by the preceding elicitation.

Adapted from Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975.

The two most significant imbalances in terms of functional allocation evident in Table 2 involve directives and metastatements. Directives is an important category because it encompasses discipline as well as classroom management. In a very real sense, directives symbolize "power" in the classroom—when a teacher utters a directive, the student being addressed must act, otherwise a crisis of authority is likely to develop. The fact that eleven out of the twelve directives were uttered in English may have been conveying, at an unconscious level, that the language of power and authority in the classroom was English. When it was crucial that something get done quickly, and when the prestige of the teacher was at stake, the language that was "really important" (English) was used. Although admittedly speculative, this interpretation is presented convincingly by Shultz (1975) in explaining similar findings in his own research in elementary classrooms.

Metastatements were also performed primarily in English. This is a critical category in looking at the transmission of knowledge in the classroom, for these acts play a crucial function in enabling the teacher to structure the lesson for the student, to place daily interaction in the context of the larger goals of the course, to "set the stage" at the beginning of a lesson and to summarize at the end. These are the kinds of functions which allow students to organize information the way the teacher desires, and the way that will likely be the basis for later evaluation. Consequently, even if information is imparted equally in English and Spanish, if metastatements tend to be predominantly in English, then Spanish-dominant students will be at a distinct disadvantage in terms of properly organizing and storing that information for later recall.

In sum, although in quantitative terms this teacher's overall language use was reasonably balanced (40% Spanish, 55% English, 5% intra-sentential code-switching), a qualitative analysis focusing on functional allocations for the two languages reveal some potentially significant imbalances.

TABLE 2

Functional Allocation of Teacher Utterances

	ENGLISH	SPANISH	Code-switching	Percentage in English	Percentage in Spanish
1. informatives	50*	31	11	54%	34%
2. elicitation	43	43	0	50%	50%
3. directives	11	1	0	92%	8%
4. metastatement	17	7	3	63%	26%
5. expressives	19	17	4	47%	43%
6. reply	37	32	0	54%	46%
TOTAL**	211	156	20	55%	40%

*These numbers indicate the number of times the function appeared in each of the two languages. The third column records those instances in which intra-sentential code-switching was used for a particular function.

**Included in the totals are "follow-up" and "humor-expressive," which have otherwise been excluded from the table.

3. Case Study #2: Language Use Patterns of Primary School Children.[3]

The task of managing a bilingual classroom filled with children from widely differing language backgrounds is an extremely complex one. Because there are commonly two different reading strands in Spanish-English bilingual programs in the early grades, as well as two different groups for second language instruction (ESL and SSL), teachers must resort to elaborate grouping strategies in order to manage student learning effectively. Since the group structure in which students function in a classroom would seem to affect in a direct and fundamental way student language use, it was hypothesized that variations in group settings would be associated with important differences in language use.

Two bilingual second grade classrooms participating in a model maintenance program were identified for intensive study. The investigator was present on a full-time basis in these two classrooms over a ten-week period. The first month was spent observing and taking notes. At that point, four students from three language dominance groups (English dominant, Spanish dominant, "balanced bilingual")[4] were randomly selected from each classroom to participate in the study. Participating students were recorded for one full day, yielding over 80 hours of recorded classroom talk. The recording procedure involved having students wear a colorful Mexican vest with a wireless microphone concealed in an inner pocket.[5] Students knew they were being recorded. Three vests were used in order to prevent the spotlight from being on only one child.

Based on the recordings that were obtained, an analysis was performed focusing on three separate dimensions of language use: (a) "amount of talk," as reflected in number of minutes of talk; (b) "complexity," determined by performing a T-unit analysis of student utterances; and (c) "language functions," focusing on the uses to which the two languages were put. This functional analysis was performed using an adapted speech act coding system (Wood 1977) containing six superordinate categories that represent different language functions (control, feeling, informing, imagining, ritual, rehearsal speech). Subordinated within these six categories are a list of 76 speech acts that provide a fairly complete representation of the kinds of things that children do with language in the classroom (e.g., suggest, promise, refuse, taunt, blame, state, report, explain).

The findings obtained in this study confirmed the hypothesis that group setting affects language use. Numerous differences were reported related to language use in contrasting group settings. The effect of group setting on language use, however, seemed to be mediated by teaching style. In the classroom where students were trained to work together in small groups (classroom P), academic talk was most prevalent in small groups, whereas in the class-

[3]This section reports data contained in the author's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation entitled *Variation in language use patterns across different group settings in two bilingual second grade classrooms*. Stanford University, 1980.

[4]These classifications were based on results from the district's language assessment procedures. The instrument used was the Language Assessment Battery.

[5]I am indebted to Courtney Cazden for suggesting this technique.

room where the teacher favored "direct teaching" as the primary means for transmitting knowledge (classroom Q), the highest proportion of academic talk occurred in the teacher-directed instructional mode.

Despite these mediating factors, a consistent finding throughout was that the small group settings seemed to provide a highly favorable context for language use. In both classrooms there was more talk in the small group setting (Table 3) as well as a higher frequency of speech acts. Another implication related to group setting is that excessive teacher control of student talk may have negative effects on oral language development. Table 4 presents the finding that the range of speech acts tended to be broader during individual work than during teacher-directed instruction.

TABLE 3

Mean Amount of Talk in Dominant Language* by
Language Dominance and Group Size: Large Group (LG) vs. Small Group (SG)

	Classroom P					Classroom Q				
	LG		SG		Pooled	LG		SG		Pooled
Lang Dom	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	S.D.
SD	20.0	11.0	41.6	15.4	16.2	11.7	5.5	13.7	7.8	6.7
BB	20.2	9.6	30.0	7.7	8.7	11.4	2.9	22.2	10.7	6.8
ED	18.3	14.5	32.6	23.9	16.3	15.1	8.9	21.1	11.0	9.9
Mean Total	19.5	10.8	34.8	15.4		12.5	5.5	18.8	9.8	

*Number of seconds talk/10 minutes
BB = Balanced bilingual
SD = Spanish dominant
ED = English dominant

TABLE 4

Mean Number of Different Speech Acts Performed in the Dominant Language: Teacher-directed (A) vs. Individual Work (B)

	CLASSROOM P					CLASSROOM Q				
	A	S.D.	B	S.D.	Pooled S.D.	A	S.D.	B	S.D.	Pooled S.D.
SD	17.3	5.1	33.3	2.3	8.9	16.8	7.6	16.8	3.1	4.5
BB	22.5	6.3	35.5	5.3	8.7	15.0	7.0	21.8	8.3	8.4
ED	25.0	5.7	33.8	7.6	8.0	20.3	0.9	35.0	9.6	10.0

S.D. = Standard Deviation

One of the most striking findings of this study was that the weaker language of all students, including "balanced bilinguals," was infrequently used in the classroom for natural communication (Table 5). This finding is of considerable interest, given that the bilingual programs in these two schools placed an emphasis on bilingualism as a goal. There are two factors that seemed to work against extensive use of the weaker language in these classrooms:

TABLE 5

Mean Amount of Talk in Weaker Language* by Language Dominance and Classroom

	Classroom P		Classroom Q		Pooled
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	S.D.
SD	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.4	1.2
BB	2.3	2.3	1.2	1.2	1.8
ED	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Mean Total	1.1	1.8	0.5	1.1	

*Number of seconds talk/10 minutes. S.D. = Standard Deviation.

1. Grouping strategies used by the teachers prevented significant interaction across language dominance groups in these classrooms. Students were seated according to their reading group. These seating patterns, which effectively separated English-dominant and Spanish-dominant students, were maintained throughout most of the day.
2. There appeared an implicit assumption on the part of the teachers that second language acquisition takes place naturally in bilingual classrooms without any need for conscious planning. It is unlikely, however, that this acquisition can take place in any meaningful way in the absence of significant language input. As long as there is only minimal opportunity or need for children of contrasting language dominance backgrounds to interact in the classroom, it is not likely that much input in the weaker language will, in fact, be provided.

Major implications for educational practice can be drawn from the finding that the weaker language is infrequently used in these classrooms. To achieve more extensive use of the weaker language in bilingual classrooms, teachers need to develop grouping strategies that provide both opportunity and need for the weaker language of students to be used for social-interactive purposes. In addition, "second language development" should be built into daily lesson plans, above and beyond what is done formally in the ESL/SSL component of the program. There are several possibilities here, ranging from informal development of the weaker language during subject matter instruction, to science and math problem-solving activities using small groups composed of students from different language dominance backgrounds.

Finally, a significant implication that can be drawn from this study is that bilingual programs demonstrate a tremendous potential for effective second language development. The basis for this judgment is the extent to which students in these classrooms used their weaker language for a variety of different functions. Despite the low quantity of talk in the weaker language, an examination of the range and content of that talk reveals that over 2/3 of talk in the weaker language involved the major communicative functions, whereas less than 1/4 was of the pseudo-communicative type (e.g., rehearsal speech).

It is evident, therefore, that the students in these two classrooms were using their second language for a wide variety of different communicative purposes. Despite the limited amount of talk in the second language, the content of that talk exhibits a broad distribution of functions over many different categories, a finding that indicates the bilingual classroom context is encouraging student language use over a broad range of functions. This contrasts with student talk in second language instructional settings, which often tends to be of a "pseudo-communicative" nature, exemplified by set responses to pseudo-questions. The "quality" of talk in the second language, therefore, is highly encouraging, with respect to both its range and its propositional content—it is the limited quantity of talk which would seem to pose a problem for more extensive second language development in programs such as these.

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Implementing the LAU Decision in the 1980's: Implications for Research

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Research on bilingualism and bilingual education has had a long and rather disjointed history, one that stretches back to the pioneering work of Hugo Schuchardt in the last century, through the detailed observations of Einar Haugen and Uriel Weinreich in the middle of this century, to the major studies of national scope now in progress. Throughout this time, attention to bilingualism has sometimes increased, sometimes lessened. Never, however, has the phenomenon of bilingualism been subjected to greater scrutiny than at the present time. It is no coincidence that this surge of interest in things bilingual corresponds in time with increased availability in this country of bilingual education, and with increased federal support for the education of children for whom English is not a first language.

The proposed rules for "Non-discrimination Under Programs Receiving Federal Assistance Through the Department of Education, Effectuation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964" (Lau Regulations), published in the Federal Register August 5, 1980, and withdrawn by Secretary of Education Terrel Bell on February 2, 1981, did not contain provisions which would have direct impact on the conduct of research related to bilingual education. Similarly, the presently operative "Task Force Findings Specifying Remedies Available for Eliminating Past Educational Practices Ruled Unlawful Under Lau v. Nichols" (Lau Remedies) does not directly affect the conduct of bilingual education research. Nonetheless, both of these documents, the political climate in which the former was withdrawn, and the legislative mandate which the latter seeks to implement, have implications for the need for research, and for its conduct.

The impetus for most of the major efforts in learning about bilingualism and bilingual education now being undertaken by the federal government derives from the Bilingual Education Act of 1978 (Title VII of the Amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act). During the deliberations on those amendments, Congress became aware of the need for well-researched information on bilingual education. Part C of the Bilingual Education Act thus provides a schedule of congressionally mandated research activities. Those activities are coordinated across a number of agencies in the federal government—including the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs, the National Institute of Education, and the National Center for Education Statistics—by an interagency group that has come to be known as the Part C Committee.

The scope of those studies and updates on their status has been reported

regularly by the National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education.[1] Without going into detail on each of the twenty or more studies mandated in Part C, it is useful to consider here the three general areas in which that work is directed. First, there are a number of projects that relate to the assessment of need for educational services on the part of language minority students and the needs of the schools and the teachers that serve them. These studies have included attempts to count the number of children involved, to project those counts into the future and to make some determination of the contingencies under which such projections must be made. The assessment of need also includes an effort to determine the supply and demand for bilingual teachers, and to determine their qualifications and the kinds of training programs which best prepare them.

The second broad area relates to the quality of educational services and how best to improve them. Some of these projects look directly at what is happening in classrooms, and more broadly in bilingual education. This area has also included the development of models or patterns for classroom activities, and considers the ways that might be used to disseminate those models. It has included such things as the development and assessment of standards for entering and exiting special programs. It has also included projects related to inservice training, parent involvement, and a number of other areas in the delivery of services to children. The third broad area of Part C relates to general consideration of the effectiveness of Title VII programs, how they are managed both locally and at the federal level, and to their continuing operation and funding.

These professionally mandated projects by no means exhaust the federal investment in bilingual education research. Each of the agencies involved in the Part C Committee has also committed some discretionary funds to research related to bilingual education. The National Center for Bilingual Research, funded through the National Institute of Education, also conducts a research agenda on bilingualism and bilingual education. Together with the research from nonfederal sources, the present national research effort bears in one way or another on almost every issue raised by the Lau Remedies or the now withdrawn Lau Regulations.

The withdrawal of the proposed regulations leaves some issues of bilingual education research moot; others, however, remain salient even in the midst of political change. One of the first things apparent to a reader of the proposed regulations was a proliferation of labels related to language proficiency: "Limited English Proficiency, English Superior, Primary Language Superior, Comparably Limited." The proposed definitions of those terms are not now of immediate interest. The underlying issue of language proficiency, however, remains of critical importance to schools which must make decisions regarding the placement of children in educational programs. Test instruments which yield scores called language proficiency have multiplied now for several years. The National Institute of Education has sponsored a series of projects,

[1] *Forum*, December 1979, pp. 2-3; December 1980, pp. 4-6.

and now a major conference on issues related to language proficiency and language proficiency testing.[2]

There remains unresolved, however, the sticky problem of what language proficiency is, besides scores on one test or another. Language proficiency is not an idea that grows from any well-grounded theory of language or linguistics. It derives instead from the world of testing. If one thinks about commonsensical notions of proficiency, it is apparent that, in general, older children are more proficient language users than younger children, that children who are proficient in one context may be less so in another, and that in most general terms, proficiency relates to language in action—communication—not just knowledge of language structure. Out of a fairly broad range of studies of classroom ethnography, researchers are beginning to develop a feeling for how widely diverse the communication contexts are in which children use language, both in and out of instructional settings, and how varied the demands of different communicative tasks are.

Proficiency assessment, however, has tended to define its own context, and frequently its own set of tasks. These classroom ethnographic studies have heightened concerns that proficiency test scores may be artifacts of testing situations, obscuring more general relationships between language proficiency and successful achievement in the classroom. One project now underway which specifically addresses these concerns is the work of Benji Wald at the National Center for Bilingual Research, examining the effects of context and topic on bilingual children's language use. Language proficiency assessment, both in English and in the home language of non-native speakers of English, will continue to play an important role in bilingual education, both in the placement of individual students in programs and in the decisions of districts to provide services. This continuing reliance on proficiency assessment warrants continuing research on what language proficiency really is, how it is differentiated, and how it is best measured.

Given that language proficiencies develop through time as children mature, it is reasonable to inquire what the acquisition process is like for children who are in the process of learning two languages. Implicit in the proposed regulations was an assumption that children who are in the process of acquiring two languages can be appropriately compared with children in monolingual environments who are learning only one language. By extension, the proposed regulations would then have labeled as "comparably limited" those children in bilingual contexts whose developmental progress did not match either set of their monolingual peers. The research base which might have been advanced to justify this extraordinarily negative label is extremely slim and not particularly supportive of the premise.

It is fairly well established that in at least some respects, second language acquisition mirrors first language acquisition, and that there comes a point at which the maturing bilingual learner might not usefully be distinguished from monolingual peers of either language. However, the protracted process of de-

[2]Language Proficiency Assessment Symposium, organized by Dr. Charlene Rivera, Interamerica Research Associates, March 14-18, 1981.

veloping proficiency in two languages, what constitutes optimal or normal development, and what language experiences are necessary to allow or to optimize that development remain largely unknown. In the face of that ignorance, the prospect of labeling a child as "comparably limited" or "semilingual" or even "alingual" because development in neither language considered by itself matches that of monolingual age mates, even though total language learning may be far greater than that of monolingual peers, is both pedagogically and socially foreboding. The National Center for Bilingual Research now has two longitudinal studies of bilingual acquisition in progress. One looks at children in the process of acquiring Spanish and English, the other at children in the process of acquiring Korean and English. These studies will follow the progress of sibling pairs over a three-year span, and are very much within the framework of research priorities outlined earlier by Tucker[3], looking at language development and particularly at the development of communication or language functioning abilities in bilingual children.

The implications of the Lau Remedies and the Regulations for bilingual research go well beyond the idea of proficiency and English language proficiency in particular. There is nothing in the Regulations, the Remedies, or in the Civil Rights Act from which they derive that requires children or anyone else to become proficient in English. Why then the concern with proficiency and proficiency assessment? Behind the concern with proficiency is a concern with access to federally assisted educational programs. The Civil Rights Act requires that access not be denied because of race, sex, or national origin. It may be self-evident to ESL educators that if a child cannot understand what is going on in the classroom, there is not equal access to education for that child, relative to children who comprehend the instruction. As the Lau vs. Nichols case wended through the legal system, two courts ruled in favor of the San Francisco School District, agreeing that the physical presence of Chinese-speaking children in the classroom, English textbooks in hand, met the requirement of equal access. Only at the level of the Supreme Court was it recognized that "students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education."[4]

Following that Supreme Court Decision, Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974. This legislation goes beyond the Civil Rights Act, stating in part that "No State shall deny equal educational opportunity to an individual on account of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, by . . . the failure by an educational agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its educational programs."[5]

The case of Lau vs. Nichols served to refine the existing notions of educational equity for children who did not speak English. Under the Equal Educational Opportunities Act, court decisions have drawn the requirements for

[3]G. Richard Tucker. "Directions for future research within the context of bilingual education programs." Paper presented at TESOL Detroit, 1981.

[4]Lau vs. Nichols, p. 568.

[5]20 USC 1703(f).

equity even more finely. The primary case in point was the Ann Arbor Black English Case. In that case it was determined that children who are speakers of Black English were precluded from equal participation in the school's educational program by the fact that they had not learned to read successfully, and that the failure of reading instruction was in turn related to the school's having not accommodated the children's dialect of English; hence a language barrier to participation.

The study of participation in the classroom has continued to be refined in the recent and ongoing work on classroom ethnography. This work holds definite promise for bringing greater understanding of the ways in which language can constitute a barrier to access and participation in education and promises to do so in a much more particularistic sense than was considered in the Lau case.

The issue of participation is integrally related to the issue 20 USC 1703 (f) of proficiency, coming together in the study of communicative competence. To date that study lacks firm conceptual unity, perhaps reflecting the variety of disciplines that have been drawn together. Nonetheless, that work continues to highlight the relationship of linguistic proficiencies to participation in communication events. With continuing need to provide equitable education for linguistically different students comes the need to continue research in classroom ethnography and communicative competence.

In their very brief tenure the proposed Lau Regulations managed to draw criticism from virtually every quarter, from the general public as well as educators, politicians, and researchers. The withdrawal of those regulations clearly signals a changing role for the federal government. Disclaimers from the Secretary of Education notwithstanding, the initiative for protecting the civil rights and educational opportunity for language minority students is likely to shift from the executive arm of the government to the courts. Court decisions to date in the area of bilingual education have drawn on bilingual research in many different ways. One thing that is apparent from reading through court decisions, including recent cases such as the decision against the Texas Education Agency by the U.S. District Court in Tyler, Texas,[6] is that the level of documentation which has been established in the various aspects of bilingual research is far from uniform. In particular, documentation of the prejudicial effect of past educational practices on bilingual children is extremely thorough. In contrast to this, documentation of the beneficial effects of mandated remedies remains slim in many respects. That is not by any means to say that there is impressive conflicting documentation that the proposed remedies would have no beneficial effect. It is simply to point out that much of that research remains to be done.

In the past, courts have been willing to mandate remedies based on the testimony of expert witnesses that the interventions will produce results. That willingness, however, resulted from the fact that the proposed interventions were in large part innovations and empirical assessment of their impact was

[6]United States of America, Mexican American Legal Defense Fund, LULAC, and G. I. Forum vs. The State of Texas, et al.

premature. Times have changed, and there are now districts that have had innovative bilingual programs in place for an entire generation of students. The requirement to demonstrate beneficial impact has now become realistic, and the bilingual research community must act now to put that research base in place. Moreover, if it is to have credibility, that research must be broadly based, confirmatory, and not just explanatory in nature.

Considering what kind of regulations are likely to replace those that have been withdrawn, one can identify a number of research implications. The present administration has made quite clear that part of the justification for any regulations will be the economic cost of the regulations versus the economic payoff. Much has been made of the estimated price tag for implementing the Lau Regulations. There is little, if any, research that provides an estimate of the cost of failure to provide adequate educational services to language minority children, or the economic benefit derived from equipping children to succeed in today's world. There are many costs that are often overlooked. The United States Army, for example, now finds itself in the position of having to provide English language training and basic skills training for recruits who did not acquire these skills in the public schools. The military has even been forced to contemplate providing pre-enlistment English language training, to bring recruits to a point at which they can function in military training. At a point in time at which there is renewed emphasis on defense preparedness, the wisdom of reducing services to non-English speaking children in the schools, and then providing comparable instruction in a military environment seems dubious.

Conversely, the economic payoff of other educational interventions is only beginning to show. For example, a study of Project Headstart children that has continued since 1962 now shows that the federal investment in headstart services is recovered several times over in savings to schools later in the careers of these children, and in increased lifetime earnings.[7] Bilingual education may well be able to demonstrate similar cost advantages. The time has come to initiate the research that will demonstrate whether or not that payoff can be anticipated.

It is also likely that new regulations will shift much of the responsibility for monitoring the protection of civil rights in the education of language minority children from the federal government to the states. Mr. Bell's comments accompanying the withdrawal of the regulations certainly suggests a lower profile for the federal government. Newspaper editorials in the English language press have been virtually unanimous in their approval of this stance. This movement to local control is actively fostered by advocacy of "federalism" within the present administration. There is a conscious attempt to expunge all trace of association with racial bias from the term "states' rights." The administration argues that "state governments have simply outgrown the inclination to discriminate because 'there's much more public consciousness about fairness'."[8]

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[7] Lawrence Schweinhart and David P. Weikart, "Young Children Grow Up." Ypsilanti, MI. 1981.

[8] New York Times, March 4, 1981.

It is under the aegis of this new move to states' rights that control of bilingual education will shift to the states. The same editorials which lauded the withdrawal of the proposed regulations as returning control to states and local schools were ominously mute about the rights of non-English speaking children for equal access and participation in educational programs, or the obligations of state and local districts to provide services. In this shift, the bilingual research community has an obligation to maintain its monitoring of the availability of educational equity, and of the impact of this administrative change on the quality of education that language minority children receive.

Out of all of these regulations, guidelines, court decisions, and legislative mandates there are few direct statements bearing on the conduct of bilingual research. There is, however, a fairly clear identification of issues which necessitate research, and to which research can bring a substantive base for improvement of educational practice. The challenge now is for the research community to demonstrate its willingness to make that contribution so that the necessary resources can be obtained, and then to deliver a quality research product.

Part 5

Literature

ED225096

The Use of Literature*

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There was a time when literature was accorded high prestige in language study, when it was assumed that part of the purpose of language learning, perhaps even the most essential part, was to provide access to literary works. There was a time when it was assumed, furthermore, that the actual process of learning would be enlivened and indeed facilitated by the presentation of poems, plays, and prose fiction.

> That time is past,
> And all its aching joys are now no more,
> And all its dizzy raptures . . . . . .

And now literature hardly figures at all in language programs. It is linguistics rather than literary studies that prevails as the informing influence. Here poetry sometimes makes a brief appearance but only to provide examples of deviant linguistic data. The term "literature" occurs quite frequently in the writing of linguists but it usually refers only to disquisitions on predicate raising, embedded clause deletion, deep case categories, and the like: deep matters, no doubt, but not always profound. A far cry from the *Mayor of Casterbridge* and the *Odes* of Keats.

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new . . . . .

But what are the arguments against the inclusion of literature in language courses? First, there is the matter of purpose. It can be argued that literature contributes nothing to the utilitarian objectives of language learning. The current obsession with needs analysis and cost effective accounting which parades as pedagogy lend weight to this argument. Literature has no practical uses and so it is useless. What is the point of teaching it to people who are looking to the language they are learning to meet academic and occupational needs? *The Scarlet Letter* will be of no earthly use to students on business correspondence courses. Students of botany will get nothing specific to their purpose out of poems on birches or daffodils or the lesser celandine. There is no need of literature in courses designed to meet the demands of practical utility.

*Plenary Address.

O reason not the need

we might cry, as did King Lear when his daughters hounded him with similar arguments.

O reason not the need. Our basest beggars
Are in the poorest thing superfluous;
Allow not nature more than nature needs,
Man's life is cheap as beast's . . . . . .

(Lear II 4)

There is more to life than safe investment of effort. Language learning is surely not simply a part of *training*, an element in actuarian estimates and the calculations of manpower needs. Surely, we might murmur wistfully, it should also have something to do with *education* as well? And is this not where literature comes in with its humanizing influence, its revelation of the hidden significance of everyday life, its celebration of language, indeed, as the expression of "the glory, jest, and riddle of the world," of "exultations, agonies and love, and man's unconquerable mind"? Perhaps. But one has to concede that such counter arguments are unlikely to be listened to in the busy din of the pedagogic production line.

But there are other arguments against the inclusion of literature. These have to do not with the *purpose* but the process of learning. Thus it is pointed out that literature is a potentially disruptive influence in the well-ordered world of the carefully controlled language course. Since creative writers do not compose by reference to a check list of graded words and sentence patterns, they produce language complexity out of sequence thereby creating nothing but alarm and despondency. Imagine a class being coaxed into the learning of a certain sentence pattern:

Can Margaret open the door? Yes she can.
Can Mary cook the dinner? No she can't.

Imagine such a class suddenly confronted with something like:

Can a storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honours voice provoke the silent dust
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

(Thomas Gray)

Yes it can? No it can't? Storied urn? Animated bust? What place do these grotesque obscurities have in the tidy simplicity of classroom language in the language classroom?

Of course you would not normally be so perverse as to choose texts of such complexity. It is possible to select literature which is more easily accommodated within a graded language course. However, there is always likely to be some lack of fit between the two, so there is always likely to be some danger of

disruption. So it is safer to resort to the usual means of dealing with nonconformity: suppress it.

There is another reason for taking such a course of action. Literature introduces complexity where it is not wanted, so offending against the principle of strict control. That is bad enough. But it also offends against another cardinal principle of conventional language teaching: the principle of correctness. Consider again the case of the storied urn. These lines surely exhibit a structure which would not be counted as correct if it were used by learners:

> Can storied urn or animated bust
> Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
> Can Margaret back to its kennel call the dog?
> Can John back to the library bring the book?

This calls for correction:

> Can John bring the book back to the library?
> Can Margaret call the dog back to its kennel?
> Can storied urn or animated bust (whatever they may be)
> call the fleeting breath back to its mansion?

And so order is restored and we return to the acceptance world.

But to adjust literature to conform to regulation standards is to destroy its character. 'Touch it and the bloom is gone.' Literature, and poetry in particular, has a way of exploiting resources in a language which have not been codified as correct usage. It is, therefore, misleading as a model. So not only is literature likely to be disruptive by its quantitative lack of control; it is also likely to be subversive by its qualitative lack of correctness. It has no place in an approach to teaching that insists on the gradual accumulation of correct linguistic forms.

So it is that literature is judged not only to be irrelevant to purpose, the ends of language learning, but also detrimental to process, the means of achieving them. Guilty on both counts and banished.

But then an interesting and paradoxical development follows. Having got rid of literature, materials writers proceed to invent their own. Textbooks are full of fiction. Mr. and Mrs. Brown, son David, daughter Mary pursuing the dreary round of their diurnal life, breakfast, lunch, tea and supper, father reading his newspaper in the sitting room, mother in the kitchen, the children in the garden, the cat on the mat, 'God's in his Heaven all's right with the world.'

There are occasional excursions. We follow their adventures at the theatre, at the railway station, in the post office and from time to time, daringly at the disco. Here they are at the restaurant. Actually this is the Miller family, son Jimmy, daughter Barbara, but the names do not matter: they are the same

familiar pasteboard figures. So here they are on stage in a dramatic sketch entitled *This Isn't Tea!*

Barbara:	Run, Jimmy!
Jimmy:	Where?
Barbara:	To the empty table!
Jimmy:	Which table?
Barbara:	The big table!
Mrs. Miller:	The square table!
Jimmy:	Is this it?
Barbara:	No, not the round table. That's a small table. Run to the square table.
Mrs. Miller:	Sit down! Sit down! Jimmy! That's the table!

The apparently half-witted Jimmy is eventually directed to the desired table but the problems of the Miller family are not over yet.

Man:	Excuse me. Is this your table?
Jimmy:	Yes, it is.
Man:	Oh!
Mr. Miller:	Waiter!
Waiter:	Yes, Sir?
Mr. Miller:	Are these cups of coffee or cups of tea?
Waiter:	Tea, Sir.
Mrs. Miller:	No, they aren't. They're cups of coffee.
Waiter:	Sorry, sir. Those are your cups of tea.
Barbara:	Yes, these are their cups of coffee and those are our cups of tea.

It is well nigh impossible to sort out what is going on in this travesty of interaction. But it doesn't matter anyway since the dialogue operates only as a device for displaying language structure. Although learners are meant to read and indeed to enact this charade in all seriousness, it is not supposed to be funny, or even remotely entertaining. Students solemnly participate without being humanly engaged.

So much for textbook drama. And now for prose fiction. A story entitled *Walking in the Park*.

> Penny and Kate are walking in the park. It is a big park with tall trees and a small lake. Penny is looking at the birds. The birds are flying over the lake. It's a small lake with boats on it. Kate is looking at a plane. It is flying over the houses.They are big houses with many windows.

Not so far a walk of great intrinsic interest. But now other human figures appear on the scene. Our pulses quicken:

Three small boys are playing football and a man is looking at them. They are playing with a small black ball. One boy is standing between two trees and his friends are kicking the ball. Now the man is playing with his dog. He is a thin man with long legs. He is throwing a ball and the dog is running after it . . . . .

How are we to characterize texts of this sort? They resemble literature in that they represent a nonverifiable reality existing in a different plane of being from everyday life. The Millers at the restaurant, Kate and Penny in the park are literary in that they appear in a setting which creates its own time and space. They are here but not present, now but not *in* the present.

These cups of coffee.
These cups of tea.

This bread I break was once the oat
This wine upon some foreign tree
plunged in its fruit . . . . . .

(Dylan Thomas)

Which cups? Which bread? Which wine? Where? Nowhere. There is no external referent; the language makes its own.

Penny and Kate are walking in the park.

The trees are in their autumn beauty
The woodland paths are dry
Under an October twilight, the water
Mirrors a still sky . . . . . .

(W. B. Yeats)

The act of referring creates the fact referred to. The expression is not a report but a representation. The park, the trees, the woodland paths, the lake, the still sky, the boats, the houses with many windows all appear in the middle distance of illusion, actual but not real, before our very eyes. A conjuring trick.

So these textbook creations are cast in a literary mode in that they relate to no context other than that of their own devising, but off from reality, self-contained, so that the language naturally draws attention to itself. The writers of such materials may claim that their efforts are simulations of reality in simple language, dealing as they do with ordinary everyday events in restaurants, railway stations, parks and post offices. But they are not simulations at all; they are dissimulations. For although the texts may exhibit simple usage and the events contained within them be commonplace to the point of paralytic banality, if we treat them as sorts of language *use* the kind of discourse that results is not commonplace at all. Dreary, uninspired, though they

may be, plodding their weary way along graded sequences; nevertheless, *considered as discourse,* they have the essential character of literature.

I am suggesting, then, that any presentation of language which is meant to have the implication of discourse is cast in a literary mode if it detaches language from its social setting and so represents meaning as a function of language itself without dependence on external context. Consider another example:

He really was an impossible person.

Here is a linguistic expression. As a sentence displaying correct usage of English it might keep company with other sentences exhibiting the same structure:

He really is an impossible person.
She really is an impossible person.
She really is a delightful person.
She really was a delightful person.

and so on. Each of these is, as a sentence, complete, correct, self-contained and because we recognize their status as samples on display, we do not seek to make sense of them as instances of language use. It would not be appropriate to ask who this person is who is impossible or delightful, or why we are being given this information. If our students were to ask such questions in the middle of a structural drill we would think it impertinent, in both senses of that word, and we would very quickly put them in their place.

He really was an impossible person.
Who do you mean, Sir?
Shut up and just repeat the sentence.

Sentences are not intended to provoke natural language reactions; they force the learner into compliant participation and they are not meant to engage the learner at the level of language use. The discourse potential is suppressed. But if such expressions *are* treated as language use, then they inevitably take on a literary quality. There is in fact a story by Katherine Mansfield which begins with these very words:-

He really was an impossible person.

Like the sentence, this is isolated from context. There is nobody outside the text that the pronoun *he* could refer to. But because this is clearly intended as a serious *use* of language and not just a display of usage, we *do* engage with it as discourse. Who is impossible? Why is he impossible? And in what way is it significant? Why are we being told this? As an instance of language use, this statement naturally provokes questions of this kind and since they cannot be answered by *external* reference, our attention is projected forward into the detached *internal* reality of the fictional world. We read on:

> He really was an impossible person. Too shy altogether. With absolutely nothing to say for himself. And such a weight. Once he was in the studio he never knew when to go, but would sit on and on until you nearly screamed, and burned to throw something enormous after him when he did finally blush his way out . . . . . .
>
> (*Feuille d'Album*)

So now we know why he is impossible. But what is this about a studio? Is the narrator an artist then? And what is his or her relationship with this impossible person? We read on.

> He really was an impossible person.

Taking this as a sentence precludes further inquiry. It signifies but has no significance. But as a meaningful use of language, though deprived of any reference to external context, its meaning potential can only be realized as literary discourse. In this sense, every piece of language that appears as a sentence in structural presentation and practice is potentially a piece of prose fiction. Or potentially a poem. Consider the following expression:

> The dog is lying by the door.

If you focus your attention at the usage level, you are not inspired to ask which dog or which door, or why the situation should provoke any comment in the first place. It is just a sentence. Here is another one:

> The cat is sitting on the chair.

So I am, you assume, demonstrating a particular structure: definite noun phrase subject, present continuous tense, prepositional phrase.

> The pen is lying on the floor.

Your assumption seems to be borne out: lexical variations on the same structural theme, as if read off from a substitution table, an array of paradigmatic equivalences. Next one:

> There is contentment in the air.

But wait; that cannot be right; it doesn't conform to pattern. What's going on? Let's go over the sentences again:

> The dog is lying by the door
> The cat is sitting in the chair
> The pen is lying on the floor
> There is contentment in the air.

What emerges now is a poem. Not perhaps one which is likely to win the first prize in the Guinness Poetry Awards, but a poem nonetheless. And you engage a very different mental set towards it. You assume, since there is no access to the outside world, that each line, now no longer a sentence, is meant to interrelate with the others to create an internally coherent meaning; that the situations represented in the first three lines are intended in some way to relate to the one represented in the fourth line; that the dog, the cat, the pen are meant in some way to express contentment, and so on. In short, you engage procedures for interpretation, you negotiate meanings. Consider another example:

The cock is crowing.
The cattle are grazing.

As they stand here, these expressions have no value as use since they key in with no context: they are sentences, formal isolates with no implication of utterance. But they can take on value as elements in literary discourse by figuring in patterns of language which create internal conditions for significance, as they do in this poem by Wordsworth:

The cock is crowing
The stream is flowing
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On top of the bare hill;
The ploughboy is whooping - anon - anon:
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

The cock crowing, the cattle grazing now appear as figures in a pattern and so we assume that they have some significance. And so we set about making sense of the expressions by referring them to other parts of the discourse in which they occur. We may conclude that their significance is slight. This after all is not a poem that conveys any great apocalyptic message. It probably would not win any poetry prizes either. But since the language is *used* there is some sig-

nificance and *some* stimulation to discover what it might be. Sentences about cocks and cattle or about anything else for that matter have no significance at all.

That's all very well, you may say, but you are forgetting Penny and Kate and the walk in the park. The teacher does not just present isolated sentences; he fits them together into a text to tell a story. We do not just have "Penny is looking at the birds". We also have "The birds are flying over the lake" related to it, followed by "It's a small lake with boats on it". Wordsworth's birds twitter, these fly over the lake. His lake glitters and this one has boats on it. But apart from these trivial matters of detail, what's the difference? Discourse in both cases.

No, not discourse in both cases. And here we come to the central issue in the argument. The pedagogic presentation of language as separate sentences and in texts of the *This Isn't Tea!* and *Walking in the Park* variety are like literature because they dissociate language from the link with social context that normally provides it with its value as use, so that meaning has to be created by means of language itself. Unlike literature, however, pedagogic presentation of this sort does not realize the meaning potential of language to create alternative contexts of reality; it simply manifests language usage, puts it on show disposed in a way that makes minimal demands on thought. So learners are not supposed to engage with what is presented at the level of language use at all. If they did, if they converted these texts to discourse, they would recognize them as a farcical distortion. At least I hope they would. It is a disturbing thought that learners of English might actually believe that the English speaking peoples spend their time in cretinous conversations stating the obvious about cups of coffee and the shape of restaurant tables. But fortunately for our national image learners do not relate to these texts in this way. They simply pay attention to the language, as they are directed to do, and suppress their natural instincts. They accept that what they are being given is for display purposes only. Text with no implication of discourse.

This is why when we take them out of the textual display case of conventional pedagogic presentation within which they are enclosed, and confront them at the discourse level, the Millers at the restaurant and Kate and Penny in the park are so ludicrous. They are fictional, literary figures. As such we would generally expect them to carry conviction as characters, instead of which they are stereotypic dummies, humanoids mouthing sentence patterns. We expect of events represented in fiction and drama to reveal something of significance which we can recognize as a kind of reality beyond realism, reconstituted from the commonplace of everyday life. Instead, in the interests of display, we have a stultifying insistence on what is ordinary and insignificant. An apotheosis of the commonplace.

So the pedagogic presentation of language, of the sort I have illustrated, does not exploit the possibilities of creativity that are opened up by a dissociation from context. Literature, on the other hand, does. And creativity is a crucial concept in language learning. I am not using this term in the diminished Chomskyan sense, to mean the cybernetic process of sentence generation. There is an abundance of that in language teaching. I mean the human

capacity for making sense, for negotiating meaning, for finding expression for new experience in metaphor, for refashioning reality in the image of new ideas and new ideals. There is very little provision made in language teaching for creativity of this sort, and so very little recognition of the human capacities of the learner. Indeed, the insistence on strict control and correctness means that the learner is cramped into conformity, 'cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in'. When he does break out from the confinement he has been sentenced to by producing creative expressions, these are condemned as errors and the learner is forced back into corrective custody. Deprived, one might almost say, of his human rights.

For the use of language and the acquisition of language are essentially creative processes. Apart from certain relatively fixed and predictable routines that only require habitual conformity, all uses of language involve the imaginative construction of meaning *ex tempore*, referring to routine not as a *script* but as a *prompt*. They involve the subtle deployment of problem-solving procedures in the process of making sense. Making sense: the very expression indicates the creative character of ordinary language activity. The kind of pedagogic display I have been referring to is fundamentally deficient because it represents language as entirely a matter of routing and in some degree, therefore, it is bound to diminish the human stature of the language user. There are no problems to solve by negotiation because meanings are made explicit within the text and carefully prepared for easy assimilation. The learner is therefore not engaged at all at the discourse level. There is nothing to engage with. Everything is ready made and there is no scope for making sense. Using material like this to develop language ability is rather like trying to produce artists with kits or painting by numbers.

Of course, it can be argued that learners already know how to use language because they have the experience of their own mother tongue. But this representation of language as scripted routine, this close confinement and control, do not give the learner a chance to act upon his experience. If he is ill-advised enough to make the attempt he will, as I have already noted, expose himself to peremptory correction. The learner does not have native speaker privileges in this respect. If the native speaker comes out with an expression not sanctioned by convention, his innovation is applauded as evidence of mastery. If the learner does the same, his innovation is deplored as a deficiency, an error, a sort of involuntary spasm of interlanguage. But creativity is not the sole prerogative of the native speaker.

The tendency of pedagogic presentation, then, is to idealize language by reducing it to routine. Literary idealization, on the other hand, involves a particular emphasis on procedures. This is a necessary consequence of dissociating discourse from an immediate social context. Dissociation of language for display purposes leads to text which represents language as essentially a matter of routine. Dissociation of language for literary purposes leads to discourse which represents language as essentially a matter of creating meaning by procedures for making sense. This is its central relevance to language teaching: it calls for an intensive use and a heightened awareness of just those procedures which have to be engaged whenever people are involved in the learning and using of natural language.

He sits not a dozen yards away . . . . .

Who? Where? What do you mean? This opening of a short story by H. G. Wells, like that of Katherine Mansfield considered earlier, immediately creates a problem to be solved and since there is no external context we can depend on, our interpretative procedures are put on special alert.

> If I glance over my shoulder, I can see him. And if I catch his eye - and usually I catch his eye – it meets me with an expression – it is mainly an imploring look and yet with suspicion in it . . . .
>
> (*The Truth about Pycraft*)

Where are these people sitting? Why is the look an imploring one? Why suspicious? We are engaged at the discourse level; we infer, anticipate, adjust, interpret. In short, we make sense as we go along.

> She was sitting on the veranda waiting for her husband to come in for luncheon . . . . . .
>
> (Somerset Maugham: *The Force of Circumstances*)

> There were four of us – George, and William Samuel Harris, and myself and Montmorency. We were sitting in my room, smoking and talking about how bad we were – bad from a medical point of view, I mean, of course . . . . .
>
> (Jerome: *Three Men in a Boat*)

> It was now lunch time and they were all sitting under the double green fly of the dining tent pretending that nothing had happened . . . .
>
> (Hemingway: *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*)

And we read on, caught up in the discourse, involved in creating a world with language, and learning language at the same time as we use it in the realization of another reality. Far from being diminished, human experience is extended.

As with prose fiction, so with poetry. There has been a good deal of investigation over recent years into the interpretative procedures that have to be used to infer the underlying coherence in everyday conversation. Poems set problems of interpretation which make appeal to the same procedures but simply require them to be more intensively, and more consciously applied, because, again, we cannot count on an external context to provide us with clues.

She tells her love while half asleep . . . .

Who are you talking about? What is the point in telling us this?

She tells her love while half asleep,
In the dark hours,
With half-words whispered low:
As earth stirs in her winter sleep
And puts out grass and flowers
Despite the snow,
Despite the falling snow.

(Robert Graves)

Remote though it may seem to be from the practical use of language so close to the heart of current pedagogy, poetry calls for the same sort of creative accomplishment as is necessary in the understanding of the most ordinary and practical conversational exchange. Poetry is useful language because it represents language use; textual display is not because it doesn't.

The useless language of the textbook can have some pedagogic value as a device for demonstration and it can provide repetitive practice for the subconscious assimilation of linguistic forms. These advantages should not be denied. But the problems it poses are internal linguistic problems and not problems outside language which language is needed to solve. So this typical textbook language cannot of its nature develop the procedural activity so essential to language use and learning. Literature, of this nature, can. It can contribute significantly to both the process and the purpose of learning because it is a significant use of language. "The ends," as Emerson puts it, "preexist in the means."

But this is not to say that we should throw off all constraint, replace our course books with copies of *Paradise Lost* and *Finnegan's Wake*, and confront our students with the baffling obscurity of the storied urn and the animated bust. We still have the responsibility to provide guidance by the careful selection and presentation of literary texts so that their potential as discourse for developing learning can be realized.

But until the case for a reprieve of literature has been accepted in principle, we cannot make a start on its rehabilitation practice. This is why, to use a deliberate ambiguity, I appeal against the sentence. And this is why I have tried to argue today for the use of literature as a relevant resource in the process and the purpose of language learning.

ED 223 067

The Multi-Ethnicity of American Literature: A Neglected Resource for the EFL Teacher

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Those of us who went through American high schools in the 1950s were likely to have been exposed, at some point, to Hyman Kaplan, a creation of the writer Leonard Ross (1937). Kaplan (sometimes written K*A*P*L*A*N) embodied the immigrant whose struggle to understand the English language is seen as comical. If there could be an Uncle Tom ethnic, Hyman Kaplan would be one. He met the expectations of some native-born Americans that immigrants are simple, ignorant, and overwhelmed with the new life they are making in America. Their attempts to learn English easily become the butt of a type of humor for which linguistic interference and cultural misunderstanding are pivotal points. When asked to read a passage from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Kaplan thinks, instead, that it is from *Julius Caesar*, whom he calls 'Julius Scissor.' When Mr. Parkhill, his English teacher, corrects him, Kaplan asks, "Podden me, Mr. Pockheel. Isn't "seezor" vat you cottink somting op mit?" And when Miss Caravello, another EFL student, comments that Shakespeare is like Dante, Kaplan takes offense that a great playwright like Shakespeare should be compared to a *Tante* or 'aunt', in his understanding.

The lesson on Shakespeare resulted from another English teacher's suggestion that Mr. Parkhill do something about improving his students' knowledge of the "glorious heritage of our literature" before they enter her class. Even though Shakespeare could hardly count as an author whose writing would build a cultural bridge between the home-language and English, it is Miss Caravello's observation that he is like a great poet about whom she has knowledge from her own culture. Unfortunately, the potential bridge-building is destroyed by Kaplan's mishearing of Caravello's pronunciation of Dante and the writer, Ross, uses the scene only for comic relief. (See L. Ross 1937, for additional examples of the above.)

Over forty years have passed since Ross created his caricature of the foreigner enrolled in the EFL class. In that period of time, we have witnessed the creation of the entire TESOL profession. With the array of specializations in classroom techniques, curriculum design, and proficiency testing, it may be difficult for us to think back to a time when the acronyms ESL, EFL, ESP, and LES did not exist. Our study foundations in linguistics and psychology make it possible for us to view our students in analytical terms. We tabulate their errors with precision and we carefully match our pedagogical practices and materials to their levels of achievement. But somewhere along the line, we have forgotten to develop a concept of the individual learner as a whole person. How sad to think that, with all our advancement as a profession, we have yet to find an alternative to Ross's view of the learner as a simple, happy, slightly retarded individual. As Henry Widdowson (this volume) points out,

the materials we use to teach reading are often farcical imitations of literature. We concentrate so intently on the formal properties of language in the reading selections that we have nothing significant to say about the use of literature for higher levels of learning.

Hardly ever does an article that deals with literary themes or with the use of literature in the classroom appear in the *TESOL Quarterly* or in any of the other journals we read regularly. While we have English for special purposes, one of those purposes is not the reading of novels, poetry, and short stories. When I began my own career some twenty years ago as a trainer of EFL teachers from Italy, I was aghast at how much more they knew about American literature than I did. It was easy then for me to take refuge behind my superior preparation as an applied linguist and dismiss this display of literary expertise as extraneous to the real task of teaching people English. In fact, I consoled myself with a secret belief that such intimate familiarity with literature was actually a symptom of bad teaching techniques. Yet, a twinge of conscience has remained to haunt me all these years, as it must any EFL teacher who wanders into the field from a training in the humanities.

We EFL teachers are a pragmatic lot. Everything we do in class must have as its goal the imparting of some kind of skill in the English language, or no one will believe that it has any value. We are also susceptible to periodic floods of influence. Since these floods have contained only a few ripples of literature, the current has pulled us in other directions. No one, to my knowledge, has ever made a case for recreating in the EFL classroom an experience akin to the one supposedly felt by the native-speaking student enrolled in a course in American or world literature. Literary specialists are fond of labeling the correct approach to literature as a "quest for truth." Stripped of its metaphysical wrappings, this quest becomes a convenient way to describe the deep, personal involvement the learner should feel with the text. Unless you have a class of engineers already involved with designing new components for the next satellite, your students may have great difficulty getting enthused with excerpts taken from publications in that field.

If we look at the matter from the rank beginner's point of view, learning how to question, agree, refute, interrupt, or change the subject from banking to renting an apartment must certainly take precedence over fulfilling any sense of empathy with creative writing. Yet, we experts can be convinced, perhaps with some difficulty, that to exert any significant degree of control over a new language one must learn how to sustain communication in it beyond participating in a string of detached and unrelated situations. We can also understand that sustained communication carries with it a sense that one's life has a modicum of coherence and that one shares in a condition which has been experienced by others. If literature gives truth to our lives, it must be a truth that we accept because we have experienced it ourselves.

So far, I have given two reasons for bringing literature into the EFL classroom. The first was somewhat frivolous, in suggesting that we should fill a lacuna in our professional preparation. The second is much more serious because it relates directly to the work that we do in our classrooms. There are not a few difficulties in teaching literature to learners of English. One is that our

sense of aesthetics might not match that of our students. What we think of as "literature" may not be so for others, or even for those above us who must pass on our choices. Another difficulty is one that is much worse, namely that our choice of literary selections may present a propagandistic or otherwise distorted picture of American life. Should literature be chosen that presents our country in glowing terms? Or should the choice give a highly critical view? Perhaps we should limit ourselves to classics which are recognized around the world – *Moby Dick* by Melville, for example.

There are even problems in defining American literature. It was once viewed as nothing more than an appendage to British literature. In reviewing the *Harvard Guide to Contemporary American Writing*, Jerome Klinowitz (1980) reminds us of what was often said about our literature at the turn of the present century: "There are few American writings that require careful analysis and merit intensive study," adding that "American literature is a branch of English literature, as truly as are English books written in Scotland or South Africa." Our literary specialists have begun to abandon this view but rather than look at the contemporary scene, they wrap themselves in the writings of the nineteenth century. Outstanding authors like Bellow or Malamud are relegated to a class of "Jewish" writers. Less than 100 words are given to the treatment of the literature which has grown out of the agony of the Vietnam war.

What can EFL teachers do? To start, we might try to find out what writers from other countries have said about America, both in English and in other languages. We should ask our students how these writers' impressions strike them. Amy Bernardi, an Italian journalist living around the turn of the century, described the America of recently arrived immigrants in vivid terms. We might try to find out how reflective of the present situation her analysis is. Of course, EFL teachers cannot be expected to have at hand a list of titles written in several languages or even a list of themes available for discussion. But such materials should be drawn together by someone, perhaps by our colleagues in FL instruction.

We should not, however, expect the present state of affairs to change overnight. It is not likely that mainline English literature specialists will be of much help. Among the rank-and-file teachers of English literature, some attention is finally being paid to women writers and black writers. Chicano writers are still neglected and writers from other ethnic extractions are almost totally ignored. In the opinion of Stephen Tabachnik (1981), most literary analysts are unwilling to stray far from the standard works of mainline writers such as Shakespeare or Milton. Not only do these analysts engage in a high degree of snobbery but also they have an ignorance of languages other than English and of cultures other than the one they perceive to be Anglo-American.

Perhaps our American literary tradition is too young, too disparate to be easily analyzed. Perhaps we stand too close to what we write, making it impossible to take a long view. But I am not fully convinced that we must be fatalistic and just ignore the question. Strands and themes can be found which unite our literature and, in the process, provide a psychological outreach to the newly arrived immigrant or visitor to our country. One strand which has

great potentiality in the learning context is the multiethnicity of our literature. As Katherine Newman (1980) puts it, our literary tradition derives from five great mother cultures: Afro-American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, and European. Traditionally, we have recognized only the last-mentioned and of that, only the British subdivision has been given prominence. Whatever its roots, our literature contains a dialectic based on a set of oppositive features:

innocence / sophistication
opportunity for all / oppression of some
individualism / group-attainment

In Newman's view (1980), our literature develops "horizontally", in waves of repeating motifs. As a result, it is difficult to impose a chronology on our literary output. British literature, in contrast, follows vertical lines, with each period set off in a separate time compartment. One need not read *Beowulf*, for example, to understand *Hamlet*. Many nineteenth-century American writers can be read by us with a sense of freshness. Plots, characters, and themes remain amazingly similar over time. Almost always present in our literature is the theme of cultural contrast and ethnic alienation. Think for a moment about James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, where Hawkeye, the American frontiersman, must take pains to explain the different ways of the Indians to the British army officer who is totally naive about such matters. Or consider Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Hawthorne mentions the misinterpretation of the Indians who see the large red letter A on the breast of the adulterer and conclude that she must be a very important person to be singled out in such a fashion.

In a country such as ours where still one out of every fifty people is foreign-born (as reported in Simon 1980), it should not be surprising to find that the themes of cultural confrontation and marginality characterize our writing. To date, the treatment of these themes has been untouched in the context of the learner of English. Part of the problem stems from our mingling of the concepts of "culture" and "ethnicity". Elsewhere (Di Pietro 1978), I have tried to distinguish between what we should subsume under ethnicity and what should be placed under culture. The term "culture" occurs much more commonly than "ethnicity" in the literature of linguistics applied to language teaching. As we have come to understand it, culture comprises patterns of behavior, systems whereby human groups are organized. Cultures can be thought of as "filters" through which new experiences are processed and understood by human groups. Our popular understanding of the term leads us to interpret culture as a system comparable to language and connected intimately with it. Just as with language, there is a cognitive context for culture which interests us as teachers and methodologists. Culture, like grammar, appears to be a left-hemisphere function.

Ethnicity, on the other hand, addresses the right hemisphere of the brain, where we store our emotions, our sense of what is right and what is wrong, and our opinions of what is beautiful and what is ugly. T-shirts that proclaim

"black (or red) is beautiful" are talking to the right hemisphere, not the left. According to Giordano (1973), ethnicity involves processes that fulfill the need for security and identity. Entering an alien society and coming into contact with other ethnic groups inevitably builds anxieties of various kinds. Even after the newcomer is convinced that the host culture has arranged life's experiences in the best of all possible ways, there is still the matter of emotional conviction. EFL teachers cannot afford to ignore the impact of ethnic confrontation on their students' acquisition of English any more than they can ignore the clash of cultures.

Once we decide to use ethnic literature in the classroom, we must be certain to make those selections which address the specifics of confrontation, such as hostility (society united against us), melancholia (a sense of having lost something precious in the old ways), and the division between the family and the new society. We should not include writings by members identified as belonging to specific ethnic groups simply because they happen to have written in English. If a writer such as Joseph Conrad is chosen, for example, it would have to be because of his ethnic themes, if any, and not because he was Polish or even because he spoke English with a Polish accent.

We should also understand that we are talking about two different audiences of students: (1) those enrolled in English classes taught abroad and (2) those learning English in the United States. Those studying abroad are not under the direct pressures of their ethnicity as those living in the United States are. As a result, the teacher of American literature in other countries has a different responsibility, namely to make certain that selections are made on the basis of a balanced representation of America. Whenever possible, it is good to discuss the literary contributions of Americans who derive from the nationality of the students. To cite one example, my Yugoslav audience of a few years ago was interested in hearing about Steven Tesich, author of *Breaking away*, a novel which has been the basis of a very successful movie and TV series. Not only written by a Yugoslav American, this book deals with an ethnic theme – that of a teenage boy who admires so much the achievements of a nationality in a favored sport that he assumes an ethnic identity with it, reversing the usual American trend.

Literature unfortunately falls easy prey to propaganda in the hands of those who wish to present a felicitous image of the home country. Many Americans, of my generation at least, were educated at public schools with a strong dose of parochialism carried over from a neo-colonialist attitude. We read, for example, poems like the following one by Robert Louis Stevenson (as cited by Simon, 1980: 64):

> Little Indian, Sioux or Crow,
> Little frosty Eskimo,
> Little Turk or Japanee,
> Oh! Don't you wish that you were me?
> You have curious things to eat,
> I am fed on proper meat;
> You must dwell beyond the foam,
> But I am safe and live at home.

It is only in growing older, much older, that I have come to understand the impact this type of literature had on me as a child. In my youth, I could take comfort in its message since it soothed me into thinking that, growing up in New York state, I was protected from all "foreign" things. Perhaps I would have felt much differently had I been an Eskimo or a little Turk – or if Stevenson had put in a reference to Italians. As an American of Italian descent, I have had to wage a lifelong fight against a stereotyping of criminality. Perhaps the fight has embittered me to a point of no-return. It did not help when my daughter's seventh-grade social studies teacher recently assigned reports on historical figures to the class and my little twelve-year-old was given Al Capone. Yet, I feel that this country is maturing and the parochialism will eventually dissipate.

It has become cliché to say that America is multicultural and multiethnic. Sometimes I think we really believe that under it all we are really uniform. Perhaps we could say that our uniformity as a nation is a core phenomenon. It stems from the overwhelming use of the English language as the vehicle of social and formal functions, except of course, in some parts of the country. It is also a cosmetic caused by the increasing sameness of our cities – skyscrapers in the middle, surrounded by ghetto slums, followed by a layer of suburbs. Our work-patterns are similar, regardless of our backgrounds, and so is our pursuit of the good life. But around this core of uniformity is packed the diversity of our intimate lives. This diversity has come to have a healthy effect on us, keeping us from being nothing but numbers at the top of a list of dull-sounding statistics. Many Americans would deny any ethnic affiliation. Yet, for all but a small percentage of us, there is a relative, perhaps a grandparent, who could speak no English, or spoke it as a second language. We stand closer than perhaps we realize to the circumstances in which our own EFL students find themselves. The trauma, the shock of learning to speak a new language under threat of nonsurvival is not too far back in most of our family histories. Yet, the notion that our literature has responded to this matter may come as a surprise. We have devalued, with great consistency, that aspect of what our own writers have produced – at least until recently. Now the ethnic theme appears in the best of our cinema – in films such as *Rocky* and *Mean Streets*, and even *The Deerhunter*, in which the intimacy of homelife, with its ethnic anchor, contrasts so starkly with the horror caused by national rhetoric.

Where to look for information about the ethnicity in our literature? Fortunately, we now have reference works such as Wayne Miller's *Comprehensive Bibliography for the Study of the American Minorities* (two volumes, 1976). There are also collections of scholarly articles which cover a range of ethnic themes, such as the two-volume work *Ethnic Literature Since 1776: The Many Voices of America* (Zyla and Aycock, 1978). Soon to appear (hopefully) is a volume on the contributions of European ethnics to American literature, edited by R. Di Pietro and E. Ifkovic, entitled *Ethnic Perspectives in American Literature* (work sponsored by the Modern Language Association of America). Among scholarly works on specific ethnic groups is Rose Basile Green's (1974) outstanding *The Italian-American Novel*. A society for the study of multiethnic literature in America has been founded under the

acronym *MELUS*. This society publishes a journal with that title. (Contact the editor: Katherine Newman, Department of English, University of So :hern California, Los Angeles, CA 90007.)

The list of American authors whose writings relate to ethnic themes in one way or another is a long one. It includes Paul Gallico, Pietro DiDonato, Mario Puzo, Jerre Mangione, Richard Gambino, John Ciardi (Italian), Louis Adamic, Charles Simic, and William Jovanovich (Yugoslav—this last-mentioned author is now chairman of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, but he is also the author of a very interesting novel entitled *Madmen Must*), and Konrad Bercovici (Rumanian). The Greek-American Elia Kazan is better known as a film and stage director, but he also wrote several successful novels: *America America*, in 1962, and *The Arrangement*, in 1967, among others. Nicholas Gage, who despite his non-Greek-sounding name is of that extraction, has written *The Bourlotas Fortune* and many other books about the underworld.

The range of ethnic themes addressed by ethnic American authors is very wide. There are novels about social conditions in the old country, reactions to the American dream, the putting down of new roots, the clash of first and second generations, the changing role of women, and the ill-bearing fruits of financial success. The Franco-American novelist Jack Kerouac (cf. *Doctor Sax* and *Visions of Gerard*) addresses religious themes, such as the strain of Jansenism in the Roman Catholic faith of Franco-Americans in New England. Guy Dubay, another Franco-American, has written *With Justice for All*, a play about the attempted eviction of Franco-American farmers from the St. John valley of Maine. This theme is one which has the ring of familiarity when we think about the recent problems of Vietnamese fishermen along the Texas coast. The articulate Russian emigre writer Vladimir Nabokov, known perhaps best for his *Lolita*, has also spoken eloquently about his own life experiences in *Speak, Memory* and in *Pnin*, in which he parodizes, tragi-comically, the emigre's life. The Jewish-American tradition is so overpowering that it is perhaps the most wed of all to the perception we have of creative contemporary American literature. The names of authors in this tradition are legend: Norman Mailer, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, and Philip Roth, to cite a few. Nor can we forget the earlier Jewish writers such as Mary Antin who, in 1912, wrote *The Promised Land*, a recounting of her journey from Russia to Boston by means of biblical metaphors. Indeed, America continues to be the promised land for refugees and emigres from Russia and other parts of the world. The Scandinavian-American Jacob Riis's book *How the Other Half Lives*, written in 1890, is a shocking expose of New York slums which is unfortunately contemporary. The poet Carl Sandburg's *Always the Young Strangers* (1952) reveals his own Swedish background. Although we might not think of him as an ethnic writer, the German-American Theodore Dreiser wrote *Jennie Gerhardt*, which is perhaps the most eloquent statement ever made about the German experience in America.

Mexican American writers are both among the most abundant of our various American groups and the most neglected. Ernesto Galarza's *Barrio Boy* is a touching story of the experiences of a youth coming to the U.S. Then there is Rudolfo Araya's *Bless me, Ultima*, which is a perceptive study of the

curandero (or 'healer') in Mexican-American culture. Tomas Rivera's *And the Earth Did Not Part* chronicles the destruction of old beliefs and myths as they are overwhelmed by the mainstream society of the new land.

The world of the newly arrived, nonfluent person is not one in which the greatest problems are hot water taps that do not work or public transportation systems which are undependable. They do not live in Hyman Kaplan's naive little world. The daily life of the immigrant or refugee is filled with animosity where indignity is heaped upon indignity. Look around you in school and you will find the hatred that makes a native American elementary school bully strike a smaller EFL student each day because the latter cannot speak English well enough to satisfy him. It is the same hatred which leads the mainstream teacher to defend the bully as a model student when the EFL aide complains about this behavior. If not hatred, it is at least a lack of societal concern which forces the parents of the child to spend long hours at jobs which no one else wants and which render home life nonexistent. Finally, it is despair which drives the father to poison himself, his wife, and his children so that they will suffer no longer in this strange land. I am not speaking about fiction, but about real life – stark, tragic, and so cruel that those attending Ms. Fidditch's EFL class would look upon Pietro Di Donato's life as a normal one. Alienation is too pedantic a term to describe what happens over and over again with the nonnative. The human condition is such that a sense of faltering in communicative skills brings out the worst in some people. The instabilities in the lives of many natives are vented against the newcomers. Somewhere in the family histories of most of us there are stories like the ones to which I refer. That we have lived them does not guarantee that we will do anything to make life easier for those who come after us.

Ethnic literature – or the ethnic theme in American literature – stands as a reminder to us and a means for the newcomer to relate personal experiences to a fictional world where those experiences can be objectified and somehow controlled. Let me give some examples: In Pietro Di Donato's *Christ in Concrete,* written in 1939, the story is told of a boy whose father has been crushed to death in a construction accident. Paul, the boy, looks for help from welfare. The inhuman treatment he receives is portrayed classically in a succinct reportage of the interview he has with the welfare agent:

> "What building collapse? Never heard about it. Was he an American citizen?"
> "He had taken out his first papers."
> "But he's dead."
> "Yes. . ."
> "Well, then he wasn't a citizen."

The timeless suffering of the emarginated poor is conveyed simply but eloquently with what follows:

> "Dogging thin feet along the pavements and big strong people coming out of food shops with great bundles and laughing with lit

> eyes and store after store chocked and flowing with bread and steak and fruit and shoes and cake and clothes and toys and darkness pushing day over tenement tops and Paul's thin wrists getting thinner and thinner."

What to do? The question can be asked over and over again and the answer is always the same. Only the lips that say it differ. Eventually Paul, still an adolescent, finds work in the same line which killed his father. Di Donato personalizes work, calling it simply "Job", as if it were a person:

> "Job was becoming a familiar being through aches and hours, plumb and level. Job was a new sense which brought excitement of men and steel and stone. Job was a game, a race, a play in which all were muscular actors serious from whistle to whistle, and he was one of them. It was pay-day, and in a few hours pay-check would sign short-short armistice. It was war for living, and Paul was a soldier. It was not as in marbles where he played for fun, it was men's siege against a hunger that traveled swiftly, against an enemy inherited."

How important is it to be able to speak well the language of those who control one's existence and have the right to say that one will survive or not. Di Donato, the unlettered, the simple youth left fatherless by a tragic accident, knows the feeling well.

Disintegration of the family is a principal theme which grows from confrontation with a new society. Here is how Joseph Papaleo has one of his characters discuss the matter with his wife (*Out of Place*, 1970):

> "I was thinking about us, about all of us. . .the picture of us around the table today. I got home and my mind went back. What I was as a kid. My father was Sicilian, with all the old ways. . .All us kids were polite, obedient, never restless or pesty. And I remember feeling like a failure when our boys went over to see him because they were never good in that way. I blamed myself every time. I even blamed you for not putting your hands on them, knocking sense into them. . ."

On the same theme, Helen Barolini ("Opera libretti and a May Day carol", *Italian Americana*, 1976, 3:19-27) recalls her childhood visits to her Italian-born grandparents in Utica, New York:

> "Go say hello to gramma, my mother would say. And we'd go to the strange old lady who didn't look like any of the grandmothers of our friends or any of those on magazine covers around Thanksgiving time when there'd be pictures of families gathering in their grandmother's cozy kitchen. Our grandmother didn't make candied sweet potatoes and pumpkin pies. She made tomato sauces and chicken soups filled with tiny pale meatballs and a bitter green she grew in

> her backyard along with broad beans and basil. She didn't speak our language."

These writers are responding to the tension that many second-generation Americans feel in their own lives. What a different picture of American life is painted by them from the sunny, tasteless "Dick and Jane" selections found in most of our EFL materials. It is rare when even a non-Anglo-Saxon name is used to identify a fictitious role in a conversation. How unAmerican is "Mario" anyway? or "Maria"? or "Carlos, Elvira, Esteben, and Rocco"?

Another theme is upward mobility. American life is saturated with the drive to be successful. It often places the children of the newly arrived immigrant in a quandary. If I love my father, then I will want to be like him and follow his trade, even when the father, himself, is convinced that the son must strive for economic success and a "better" life. Mario Puzo shows the dark side of this issue in the conversation he creates between the elder Corleone, the godfather, and his son, Santino, who wants to follow in his father's footsteps. The don speaks:

> "Don't you want to finish school, don't you want to be a lawyer? Lawyers can steal more money with a briefcase than a thousand men with guns and masks."

Admittedly, the picture presented is not one that fits our rosy view of life in the United States, but that rosiness has always been much more in the mind of the EFL teacher than in the reality of immigrants, refugees, and foreign visitors to the United States. The person who does not speak English well often runs into the dishonest side of all our public institutions. Once you remove the criminal frame of reference from the excerpt of *The Godfather* given below, you have the same staunch middle-class values which motivate most of our population. The difference is that the newly arrived often has a tail-end view of the value system. In the typical EFL class of any age in this country, the only person not suffering from alienation is the teacher. Armed with her textbook and her other teaching aids, she is likely to build an unreal shell around herself.

The second and third generations—sometimes even the first—produce, from time to time, those authors who can write eloquently of what the change in language has meant psychologically. While researchers on second-language acquisition pursue their fine-grained analysis of incipient grammars, few rarely reach the heights of emotional knowledge of what the shift in languages can do to a way of life. The following lines are from a poem entitled "Wake" by Rosario d'Agostino (see Caroli, Harney, and Tomasi, 1978: 375-376). The reference is to a tradition of mourning the dead which is changing in the context of America:

> "I stay in the room with the men.
> I know that this will happen
> only a few time more, that
> the children's children

are already forgetting the language,
we will not know how to chant and wail.
I will be the first with a more
well-mannered grief. I am the first
to think in English."

The poem goes on to describe what is already happening to such events as wakes. Perhaps we who have sanitized death so thoroughly in America look upon these emotional goings-on as barbaric. Yet, for the newly arrived, all rites of passage in life are still tied to home cultures and languages. D'Agostino's poem would be a good candidate for a text of readings for adult EFL students. It is simple in grammatical structure and vocabulary while addressing a matter of great concern to the displaced nonnative.

In gathering materials for reading in class we should not pass over the writings of nonnatives. We teachers become so accustomed to investigating our students' compositions for errors that we forget to seek out the eloquence of statement that some might contain. A fine example of what a beginner can accomplish in English is found in the defense that an uneducated Italian immigrant built for himself and his friend before a jury in a murder trial some eighty years ago. I report only a portion of Arturo Giovannitti's statement (as cited in Tusiani, 1977):

> "And if. . .these hearts of ours must be stilled on the same death chair and by the same current of fire that has destroyed the life of the wife murderer and the patricide and matricide, then I say that tomorrow we shall pass into a greater judgment, that tomorrow we shall go from your presence into a presence where history shall give its last word to us."

It is ironic that, at the same time that Giovannitti was making his plea, the American public was being entertained by the rhymes of Thomas Augustine Daly, who delighted in caricaturing Italianized speech:

> 'Giuseppe, da barber, ees greata for 'mash',
> He gotta da bigga, da blacka mustache. . .'
>
> (Tusiani, 1977)

The dynamics of conflict and turmoil in any society produces the base for its literature. The travails of our most recent arrivals will become the raw material for our new American literary efforts. If we look around us, we will witness the genesis of that new literature. One refugee from southeast Asia told me about how people from her country try to keep their customs alive here. One such custom involves the meeting of families to arrange marriages between their young people. In the homeland, the procedure was protected by a ritual which no one ever questioned or needed to have explained. In America, instead, the relative wealth of the families is not determinable, nor

is its social position. The strategy of not wishing to display oneself as less powerful than the other family forces the two sides to find new outlets for their customs. Meeting places are mapped out with precision so that they are equidistant from the houses of the two families. Thus, no demonstration of inferiority or unnecessary accommodation can be ascertained. But what if the two families live in different cities? Then, very careful calculations are made so that the meeting site can be established at an exact mid-point. It sometimes happens that their calculations produce a location somewhere on a superhighway. No matter. The two heads of family will start out from their respective cities and proceed to that location, careful to park their cars an equal distance away. Each party then exits and walks to the mid-point, along the shoulder of the road, often with other cars whizzing by, their drivers unaware of what very significant social event is taking place for these people. Even if this custom does not survive in the next generation, the children of these people will remember, perhaps with melancholy, that something was lost that was precious from the old culture.

Where in literature can we find a similar situation depicted? Perhaps in a poem or in a short story which has already been written. At the annual convention of the Modern Language Association in Houston, in 1980, the Lebanese American poet Samuel Hamod read a poem of his own which focused on his family stopping by the side of a highway to say their Moslem prayers. The father and the uncle argue about which way is Mecca while the Americanized son, too embarrassed to join them, sits in the car and tells his father that he is keeping watch while they pray. The EFL teacher might discuss such a poem with her students. Was the son correct in staying in the car? There will certainly be pro and con represented among those in the EFL class.

Whatever literary selection is made, students can be directed to create scenarios and compositions based on them. Many aspects of discourse can be taught through literature: foregrounding of new information, the mechanics of reported speech, and the features of narration that are culture-specific, to mention a few. Of course, the use of selections from literature is not new in FL instruction. Teachers have often built exercises around the special vocabulary or structural peculiarities of creative writing. However, we have yet to develop pedagogical devices which go beyond the constraints of sentences. Among the challenges we are yet to meet is how to teach discourse which extends over a series of related events. Teachers might find some value in the use of the "open-ended scenario" (Di Pietro 1981). In this type of scenario, students must work through a number of episodes linked together in an overall theme. Each episode contains a problem the solution to which is open-ended. The way in which the following episode evolves depends on the type of interaction which took place in working through the preceding problem. In addition, each episode may involve different persons who share varying degrees of information about the plot.

In one variation of the open-ended scenario, a reading is first assigned which is built around some issue of ethnicity and/or ethics. This reading might be similar to the excerpt from Puzo's *The Godfather*, mentioned earlier, in which the son wants to follow in the father's footsteps. The teacher

then assigns various groups of students the task of preparing arguments for (a) the father who may either discourage or encourage the son to take up his trade and (b) the son who may or may not want to follow the father. The teacher may supply the information that the father is involved in an underworld activity. In a subsequent episode, a new role may be introduced – that of the teacher who must tell the father that his son is not performing well in school. What the father says to the teacher must be premised on the earlier interaction with the son and with the backdrop of his criminal activity.

Another way to tap the psychological and linguistic treasures locked in literature is for the teacher to make an analysis of the plot of a novel, underlining the various options the author could have taken in advancing the storyline. Students can be asked to retell the story so that it follows a diverse developmental route. The chance to participate in such an extended learning experience not only promotes the drive to become more competent in English but also provides a psychological safety-valve for the students' own anxieties.

The compilation of literature sensitive to ethnicity and its adaptation to the classroom are not enough. We must also consider the teacher's own disposition to undertake such an exercise. Wilma Longstreet (1978) suggests that teachers complete "ethnic profiles" as a way to assess their attitudes toward other people. Such profiles would touch on five aspects of participation in society: (1) verbal communication, (2) nonverbal communication, (3) orientation modes, (4) social value patterns, and (5) intellectual patterns. To the above we can add a sixth, affectual relationships. Without going into details, one might start with a series of questions running along the following lines:

(1) Do you know what your own extraction is?
(2) If you derive from multiple backgrounds, is there one which seems to stand out? If so, do you know why?
(3) Are there any home holidays or other special occasions at which the family keeps some custom alive?
(4) Do you retain anything from a language other than English which you spoke or heard spoken as a child?
(5) Do you remember a relative or do you still have a relative living in the U.S. who does not speak English natively?
(6) Have you had any difficulty communicating with such a person?
(7) Have you ever been ridiculed or accused of being foreign for doing or saying anything in public? If so, what was your reaction?

Depending on the answers received, a workshop could be organized to relate one's recollection of past events to the present situation of immigrants, refugees, and boat people. Perhaps a panel could be established with representatives from these newly arrived groups, to discuss the relevancy of literature to their experiences.

One basic point underlies all that I have said, namely that in learning to communicate in a new society, one looks, sometimes in vain, for that which relates to what one has already experienced. The shared and the familiar stand as sign-posts marking a safe path through the tangled forest of unknow-

able social behavior. Creative literature taps the imagination—the right-hemisphere, if a more psychologically appropriate term is needed. When that literature deals with concerns already in the reader's mind, it has its greatest utility as a learning experience. The EFL profession is well populated with experts of various kinds, but practically no one has taken on the task of how to help our students to develop a healthy mindset about the English-speaking society which surrounds them. Ethnic literature responds to the moral imperatives of our times like no other one. It will not let us forget that what was past is also prologue in the shaping of our society. In pain and alienation, our students are not alone. Just knowing that can be of great help to them.

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ED227078

All This Fiddle: Enhancing Language Awareness through Poetry[1]

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Marianne Moore begins a poem entitled *Poetry* with this starting line:

> I, too dislike it: there are things that are important
> beyond all this fiddle. (Reprinted in Hall 1969:120.)

Moore is obviously setting out to disarm her readers by acknowledging the popular feeling that poetry is not one of the significant concerns of everyday life. In borrowing her phrase for my title, I am acknowledging the widespread feeling that poetry is unnecessary in our ESOL classrooms, while at the same time hoping to disarm you so that I can make a convincing argument for the great importance of poetry as a component of language teaching. After briefly presenting my case, I will suggest specific ways in which you can incorporate poems into your lessons in the coming weeks—and, if you find the activity pleasant and profitable, in the coming years.

While Blatchford (1974) has presented a strong case for banning literature from the early stages of English teaching overseas, TESOL has officially recognized (Norris 1972) the importance of an understanding of literature for the teacher of ESOL within the United States. In practice, of course, few of the institutions granting advanced degrees in TESOL require a specific study of literature, and few graduate students find the leisure to pursue such courses on their own. The result is that many ESOL teachers who enjoy poetry themselves don't know where to begin in sharing that pleasure with their students.

Does it matter? Yes, as was pointed out more than a decade ago in *Language Learning*, *English Teaching Forum*, and *TESOL Quarterly*, it does. In the pages of these journals, we find an eloquent presentation of the case for sharing the English literary heritage with our students.

A literary experience is also a language learning experience, Arthur (1968:206-207) maintained, because first, "stories received as literary experience are repeatable," and second, "the language of literature is memorable," not only because of rhythm and rhyme but also because "people tend to remember best what interests them deeply rather than what they are told to remember or are consciously trying to remember."

Addressing teachers of English overseas, W. Marquardt (1968:8) emphasized the importance of literature in preparing the way for genuine communication between members of different cultural groups.

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[1]This paper originated as part of a panel chaired by Virginia French Allen, NCTE 1977. Subsequent versions have been presented at the 1979 NYS ESOL BEA Fall Conference and TESOL 1981.

> Knowledge of the deep structures of the target language and of the underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, and intergroup attitudes of its culture are now seen to be as important in the real mastery of a language as a facile use of the patterns of every day speech. And the study of the literature of the language is felt to be the surest way to attain these more elusive qualities that go to make up a total mastery of the language.

Povey (1967:42) also stressed the value of literature as "a link towards that culture which sustains the expression of any language." Later, writing specifically of poetry, he reminded us that "English poetry demonstrates the ultimate limits of language usage; for poetry is language charged with meaning to the highest degree" (1969:26), and he included the wise observation that "a combination of learning and pleasure in a single class carries its own convincing educational value" (1969:30).

Recently a young woman from Colombia, who was enrolled in a college-preparatory reading and discussion class, expressed a foreign learner's perception of these same ideas. In response to the students' curiosity about literary allusions in *Newsweek* articles, the instructor had included explorations of Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* and Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* in the final week of the course. At the end of the last class, Maria Teresa sighed with pleasure. "What I have learned from you this summer," she said to her teacher, "is that English can be a beautiful language." She went on to say that while she had always known it was essential to learn English, she had thought of the language as simply practical and utilitarian. And, though she was too tactful to say so, Maria Teresa had clearly never imagined that English could have the same subtlety, elegance, and emotional range as Spanish.

It is evident, then, that without some study of poetry—as well as other literary genres—our students are deprived of an understanding of the full nature of English. And should you, or your supervisor, find that pleasure and cultural understanding are insufficient reasons for the inclusion of poetry in an ESOL classroom, a study of poetry can be used for the very practical end of enhancing students' language awareness.

Let me introduce the ways in which I think this can be done by suggesting four principles for sharing poetry with adolescents and adults in an ESOL classroom setting. (I've presented ideas on teaching poetry to younger students in McConochie 1979.) Here they are:

1. Choose poems which will lead your students to a deeper understanding of themselves.
2. Start with the story in the poem.
3. Help your students to recognize and, as far as possible, to understand the poet's underlying cultural assumptions.
4. Treat the formal aspects of a poem as ways in which a poet plays with the linguistic resources of the language.

The first principle is concerned with emotional as well as intellectual involvement. Self-understanding is a matter of lifelong concern for all of us; why not then capitalize on this concern in selecting poems to teach? (Stevick, 1977, has gone a step further, writing poems with just this goal of self-understanding in mind.)

You might introduce the study of poetry by asking your students to explore a poetic statement of feelings that they themselves have had. Here is such a poem to share with students from tropical countries like Haiti, Puerto Rico, or Jamaica – the birthplace of the poet Claude McKay.

Seeing tropical fruit in a store window in Harlem, the speaker in McKay's poem remembers parish fairs (we'd call them *county fairs*) back home in Jamaica. He thinks also of fruit trees growing by the side of small streams (or *rills*) and of dew-laden dawns. And he recalls his sense of religious awe at the beauty of his country. The poem (reprinted in McKay 1953:31) is a cry of homesickness called

The Tropics in New York

Bananas ripe and green, and gingerroot,
  Cocoa in pods and alligator pears,
And tangerines and mangoes and grapefruit,
  Fit for the highest prize at parish fairs,

Set in the window, bringing memories
  Of fruit trees laden by low-singing rills,
And dewy dawns, and mystical blue skies
  In benediction over nunlike hills.

My eyes grew dim, and I could no more gaze;
  A wave of longing through my body swept,
And, hungry for the old, familiar ways,
  I turned aside and bowed my head and wept.

"Hungry for the old familiar ways:" in his summation, the speaker has moved from homesickness for Jamaica to a universal level of feeling. Surely his emotion is one which our students could easily share, and they might also be relieved to find their feelings reflected in a work of literature.

The second principle, following Brooks and Warren's contention (1960:22) that "every poem is, at center, a little drama," suggests that you start with the story – with the drama at the center of the poem. That is, begin with the dramatic content of the poem, rather than its rhyme scheme or meter or imagery. You may want to introduce the poem by identifying the story-teller (who, of course, always needs to be distinguished from the poet) and then summarize the story to be told, as I did in introducing *The tropics in New York*. Or you may choose to assign the poem with a study guide to help the student search out answers to such questions as these: Who is the story-teller? Who or what is the story-teller talking about? Where is the story set? What

happens in the course of the poem? How do you know? The way a reader finds the answers to these questions is a crucial puzzle for you to help your students solve.

To illustrate this problem-solving process—a process by which your students can discover the story of the poem for themselves, let's examine a second poem, one which might well appeal to a timid student from Korea, Vietnam, or Japan who is caught between the self-effacing values of the Orient and the aggressive buoyancy of the United States. Once they understand the words *banish*, *dreary*, and *bog*,[2] many students relish this conspiratorial whisper from Emily Dickinson (Johnson 1955:206).

I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Are you—Nobody—too?
Then there's a pair of us!
Don't tell!—they'd banish us, you know!

How dreary—to be—Somebody!
How public—like a Frog—
To tell your name—the livelong June—
To an admiring Bog!

For that poem, the question of the story-teller's identity is the most fruitful. Who is the story-teller? For the first three and one-half lines, the speaker (the *I*) sounds like a child. Why? Because of the confession of unimportance, the eagerness to find a friend, the pleasure in sharing a secret, and the fear—expressed in the childish admonition "Don't tell!"—that *they* (adults? other more self-confident children?) will find out the secret. In addition, these ideas are expressed in a series of six short simple sentences (four statements and two questions).

But with the verb *banish*, the tone shifts. True, a child might learn that word in the context of a fairy tale (e.g. "The wicked counsellor was *banished* from the kingdom, and the prince and princess lived happily ever after."), but a more ordinary context for the word is the realm of adult politics. *Dreary* is also an adult word, with a sophisticated, slightly bored tone. *How public* sounds quite snobbish. Moreover, to look once again at syntax, the four lines are composed of two elliptical sentences, with no subject or verb in either.

Complementing these contrasts in vocabulary and syntax is a shift in the speaker's attitude toward the world. In the first stanza, the *I* fears exclusion from society. But in the second stanza, the speaker compares society to an indiscriminate—and undiscriminating—assembly of insects and amphibians in a swamp.

After guiding your students to a discovery of these contrasts, you might pose alternatives for discussion. Could the poem be the voice of a child who is

[2]Here are glosses I use on a handout with the poem: *banish* - force someone, by official order, to leave his or her homeland; drive someone away. *dreary* - sad, depressing, boring. *bog* - wet, swampy land (too soft for humans to walk on, but ideal for frogs).

imitating the tone of blase adults in order to hide its own insecurity? Or might the *I* be an adult reverting to the voice of a child in order to speak about hidden feelings? The questions can be posed in this form for an advanced class, with paraphrase to be sure that everyone understands what is being asked, or reworded for use with less advanced students.

This analysis has led us to the third principle, which suggests the importance of helping students to recognize and, as far as possible, to understand the underlying cultural values in a poem. That is, in reading poetry, as in reading any work of literature, your students need to become aware of cultural references and implicit cultural values.

Experimental evidence has shown that even people who are fluent speakers of a second language may be quite unable to understand imaginative writing —or real-life situations—when a basic conflict in cultural patterns is present (Yousef 1968; Gatbonton and Tucker 1971). Lack of understanding may also result from the presence of a cultural item which is either mystifying or simply unnoticed.

In the McKay poem, for example, the feeling of homesickness is easy enough to understand. But for a deeper sense of the poem, the reader needs to understand the referents of *alligator pears, cocoa in pods,* and *parish fairs,* as well as recognizing the religious overtones of *mystical, benediction,* and *nunlike hills.* Such recognition isn't necessarily easy for someone raised, say, as a Buddhist in northern Japan—or as a Protestant in northern Illinois; understanding requires both an awareness of cultural differences and an act of will to enter the poet's world.

To illustrate how this act of will is performed, you might begin with poems which reflect your students' life experience, with you taking the necessary steps to untangle cultural referents. Naturally this calls for imaginative effort—effort which is amply repaid when it enables us both to broaden our experience of literature and extend the boundaries of our personal worlds. My discussion of the McKay poem suggests some of the steps (e.g. looking up *rills,* remembering that *alligator pear* is another name for *avocado,* and trying to imagine cocoa coming from something other than a chocolate-brown box with "Hershey" on it) I went through in coming to an understanding of the poem.

Pincas (1963) has described "cultural translation" exercises in which students are asked first to identify culturally significant words and actions in a literary passage and then to rewrite the passage, expressing its ideas in terms of their own culture. This use of cultural contrastive analysis suggests an approach to poems which are subtle in their inclusion of cultural artifacts. Consider, for example, the opening lines of Theodore Roethke's poem *The Meadow Mouse* (reprinted in Hall 1969:162-163):

> In a shoe box stuffed in an old nylon stocking
> Sleeps the baby mouse I found in the meadow
> Where he trembled and shook beneath a stick
> Till I caught him by the tail and brought him in,
> Cradled in my hand, ...

To help an ESOL student understand this poem on even the simplest level, you would need to start by talking about why someone would want to bring a mouse indoors, a point which might also need clarification for city-bred Americans. You could discuss what other kinds of small, wild animals an American would try to protect – rabbits, for instance, though certainly not rats and usually not snakes.[3] Would a Mexican, or an Iranian, have the same feelings about protecting animals? The same animals? Surely not, for this is a point on which cultures differ radically. However, in the poem at hand, Roethke assumes that his readers will understand, if not share, his speaker's view that rescuing an abandoned baby mouse is a reasonable, and kind, thing to do.

What else would many adult native speakers of English know, almost instinctively, from the poem? To me it seems clear that the speaker is a middle-aged man who lives in the country with his wife, that he identifies the young mouse with a human infant, and that he is nostalgic about fatherhood. How do I know all that? My initial feeling was based on the cultural resonance of *old nylon stocking*, *baby* mouse, *he* used to refer to the mouse, and *cradled*. The associations that those words triggered in my memory led me to my hypothesis about the speaker; the remainder of the poem provides similar evidence and substantiates the hypothesis.

The point, however, is not my specific reading of this poem but rather the vast store of cultural knowledge that any person brings to the reading of literature in his or her native language. It is this knowledge that I am suggesting we try to share with our students. And, as A. Marckwardt (1978) has pointed out, by far the most effective way to help students learn the cultural values underlying the English language is to arrange for them to discover those values for themselves, with literature being a convenient medium for the discovery.

The first three principles – choose poetry that can lead to enhanced self-understanding; start with the story; clarify underlying cultural values – focus on the content of the poetry you choose to teach. The remaining principle deals with the formal aspects of a poem – those matters of presentation which differentiate poetry from prose.[4]

The fourth principle suggests that you help your students to see how a poet plays with the resources of a language. Surely we have all experienced the delight of such discoveries. Do you remember, for example, the pleasure it once gave you – and perhaps now gives youngsters of your acquaintance – to chant "I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream"? That youthful enjoyment in manipulating the grammar, syntax, and phonology of language in an unexpected way can carry over to adult pleasure in the tantalizing similes and unanticipated rhymes of such lines as these from Archibald MacLeish's *Ars Poetica* (reprinted in Untermeyer 1950:472):

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[3] A conflict between an American farm boy and his father over the value of a snake's life is the core of *Love*, by Jesse Stuart, a story included in McConochie 1975.

[4] I first looked into Widdowson's *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* (1975) after delivering this paper at TESOL '81. Widdowson demonstrates a strategy for examining the ties between form and meaning which goes far beyond what is presented here. His ideas offer challenging avenues for exploration.

A poem should be palpable and mute
As a globed fruit
Dumb
As old medallions to the thumb.

Helping your students to recognize and enjoy such adult word play will require sensitivity on your part, but you need not feel that only a Master's degree in literature could possibly qualify you. I've offered a close reading of the Dickinson poem to show how the poet uses a shift in diction to emphasize her speaker's scorn for the "somebodies" of the world; but you certainly would have understood the point of the poem, if not the extent of the poet's skill in shaping it, without such an analysis.

If you prefer a less literary approach, there are many other ways to examine a poet's craft and art, while at the same time enhancing your students' linguistic skills. Let's examine some of those ways.

One idea is to use a poem as the basis for a structurally-oriented slot-and-filler exercise. Write a poem on the board with some words left out (adjectives, verbs, rhyming words – whatever you decide to focus on in a given poem). Then ask your students to suggest words which are structurally and lexically possible as fillers. You can let the class guess until the poet's choice has been hit on, or you can record several suggestions and then read the original to the class. When students are familiar with this sort of exercise, they enjoy working in pairs on a partially-deleted copy of the poem, writing in their guesses of the poet's choice of words before seeing the original. You can either use uniform lines for the missing words (as in the first example below) or provide blanks to indicate the number of letters (as in the second example).

What words would you guess the poet James A. Emanual chose to complete these lines? (They're the opening stanza of *Get Up, Blues;* reprinted in Bontemps 1963:175.)

Blues
Never climb a _____
Or _____ on a roof
In starlight.

The poet's choices were *hill* and *sit*. Here's another line to try:

Spring is like a _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ hand,

That, of course, is e.e. cummings (1963:75); the missing word is *perhaps*. Cummings' poetry provides many such examples of functional shift – using a word which is normally one part of speech in a different way, e.g. using the normally-adverbial *perhaps* as an adjective.

A second technique to show how a poet organizes his or her thoughts is to hand out the lines of poem as a strip story (Gibson 1975). With poetry, I modify the original procedure, using three-by-five-inch cards rather than strips of paper, each card containing a single line of the poem to be assembled. Another modification for poetry is that it is wise to let students keep their

cards for emergency reference. I've tried this successfully with Robert Frost's *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, presenting the poem in class as a strip story after the students had read it at home. They discussed the surface meaning – the story – thoroughly as they reassembled the poem, discovering the poem's *abcb* rhyme scheme in passing. We were then able to consider the symbolic implications with everyone confident that he or she had already understood the poem on at least one level.

A third suggestion for approaching poetic structure in an ESOL class is to use sentence de-combining, a technique that is particularly useful for dealing with grammatical embedding and poetic inversion. If your students are familiar with sentence-combining procedures, you can guide them to produce a list of sentences; otherwise, you can give the sentences as an example of the de-combining process. In either case, a set of simple sentences drawn from a poem can provide the basis for a rearrangement exercise to illustrate the sequential shifts so common in literature. You will recognize this set as coming from the Roethke poem previously quoted:

> Activity: These events are in "poetic order." What order do you think they really happened in? That is, what do you think happened first? And what happened next? (You can number the sentences to show what you think, or you can draw a series of pictures to show what happened.)
>
> ____ Someone stuffed a shoe box into an old nylon stocking.
> ____ A baby mouse is sleeping in the shoe box.
> ____ I found the mouse in the meadow.
> ____ The mouse trembled and shook.
> ____ The mouse was hiding under a stick.
> ____ I caught the mouse by the tail.
> ____ I brought the mouse into the house.
> ____ I cradled the mouse in my hand as I carried him.

The suggestion to students that they might draw the events described in the poem is intended to stimulate their visual imagination. Whether that imagination is translated into an actual drawing is, for the purposes of a language class, unimportant. A verbal description would serve as well as a check on comprehension, though the act of drawing might be much more powerful for a student.

Yet another way to help your students deal with poetic inversion and other peculiarities of poetic diction is to ask them to translate from "poetry language" into everyday language. For example, in McKay's poem, the lines

> My eyes grew dim, and I could no more gaze;
> A wave of longing through my body swept.

could be translated as "My vision blurred (because my eyes were filling with tears), and I couldn't go on looking (at the fruit in the store window). I was

overwhelmed by a feeling of homesickness." Obviously this translation is no longer poetry. An examination of *why* it isn't—of what has been lost in the process of rewording—can help your students to understand what a poem is at the same time that they are exploring what a particular poem means. Then one day they may be ready to consider MacLeish's insistence, concluding the poem quoted above, that "A poem should not mean / But be."

A fifth suggestion for making poetry accessible to your students is to relate specific poems to the rhetorical structure of expository prose. We're presently experimenting with that idea at Pace University, where both expository writing and an introduction to poetry are included in the ESOL sections of English 101. A basic freshman composition text is supplemented with poetry chosen to match each of the rhetorical categories presented in the book. Comparison and contrast, for example, is illustrated in Dickinson's *I'm Nobody! Who are you?* and A. E. Housman's *When I Was One-and-Twenty*. Then students consider a thematically-related pair of poems—Walt Whitman's *I Hear America Singing* and Langston Hughes' *I, Too, Sing America*. An essay comparing and contrasting the latter pair follows as a natural writing assignment using the mode of rhetorical development under study.

Finally, for any study of poetry, it is crucial that the poems be read aloud. You can practice in front of a mirror—or with a tape recorder—and then read to your students. You can make use of the wealth of recorded poetry available on the Caedmon label. You can also call on a speech teacher in your school for a poetry reading session or, better yet, have your students organize their own, perhaps after listening to a record or seeing a film of a poet reading his or her own works.

There you have four principles and six techniques for using poetry in the ESOL classroom. I hope that you will consider my suggestions not as "The thin stuff which dreams are made of" but rather as ideas which you can use to enrich your life and the lives of your students by sharing poetry.

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